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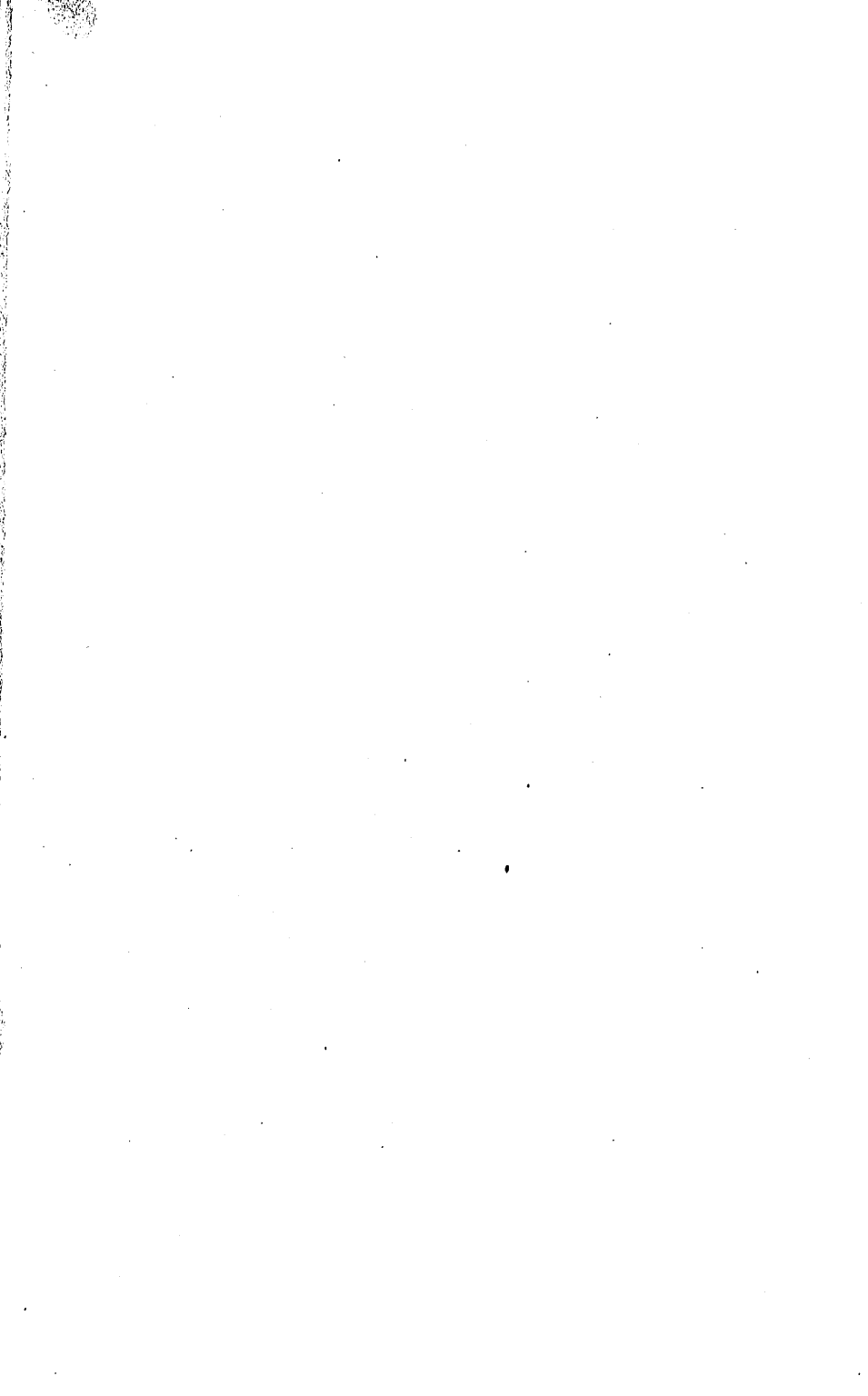
THE
GOD EXPERIENCE

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THE GOD-EXPERIENCE

A Study in the Psychology of Religion

By

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TO

Miss Paul Mudge

WHOSE CONSTANT HELP AND ENCOURAGEMENT
HAVE MADE THIS BOOK POSSIBLE,
IT IS GRATEFULLY DEDICATED BY HER HUSBAND

PREFACE

ONE OF the great gains of modern psychology is in the recent tendency to reevaluate the various senses and emphasize the great significance of certain sense elements hitherto underestimated. Previously we have devoted our chief attention to vision, audition, and other senses which most clearly objectify experience; we are now turning to those senses, like pain, strain, and temperature, which vitalize experience and make it significant; and the present tendency is toward a frank and full recognition of the fact that in all human experiences these deep-seated, *intimate* senses are of the greatest importance. That this is true is indicated by the work of such students as Crile, Cannon, Carlson, and others, who have found the roots of the great emotional tendencies and active attitudes in the deeper-lying organic and sense mechanisms rather than in the intellectual cognitions to which sight and hearing are so important.

The present volume seeks to discover the applicability of this newer evaluation of the senses to what is perhaps the most complex experience of all, our attitude toward God, or toward whatever we conceive to be the fundamental reality of the universe. The God-experience owes its vitality to the fact that it is deep-rooted in the most vital and significant elements of sense and feeling. It is more than cognition or intellectual comprehension. A merely cognitive God-idea is relatively cold and distant. The God-experience is relatively warm and vital, and although cognition has a place within the experience, it is among the lesser values. The total experience is worthful in so far as it embodies the affective and emotive elements which have their root in the intimate senses and organic reactions. This being true, there is need of a change in the center of gravity of our study of religion. We have been too often chiefly concerned with religious cognitions, religious ideas. Henceforth we must shift our central emphasis to other levels of mentality. We must study the affective and motivating phases of mind.

The God-experience, differing according to individual temperament, social environment, place, time, and attendant circumstances, is always more complex than surface observation would indicate.

PREFACE

It is conditioned by many sensory factors and bodily reactions which blend into what we call our feeling states. Of these, the most significant are often those which are most hidden from casual recognition. Such are the kinesthetic sensations, or sensations of strain in various parts of the body, and the organic sensations which have their seat in the deeper-lying tissues. These often appear in such complex relations with one another that we experience them as a vague blending of sensations, difficult to locate, which enter into our "common feeling" or general bodily tone. These and similar elements are significant factors in all our attitudes, including our attitude toward God. A study of the words of Jesus, for example, indicates that his deeper experiences, those which mark the most worshipful moments of which we have record, were conditioned by such feelingful elements. The attitudes to which he commends his disciples are indicated by such terms as hungering and thirsting after righteousness, being pure in heart, worshiping the Father in spirit, having within one a well of water springing up unto eternal life. The God-experience for him is not a mere cognition of God; it is an attitude as toward a father, a feeling of union with him.

This book does not profess to be a complete analysis of the God-experience. No number of formulæ of physical and mental characteristics which might be presented would be sufficient to the infinite variety of personalities. But if, in the midst of the variations, there may be distinguished order and system, this study may not be without practical value. Whatever worth it contains is due in great degree to many friends who have rendered effective co-operation, especially to Professor Edwin D. Starbuck, whose encouragement and wise counsel have been its chief inspiration.

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THE GOD-EXPERIENCE

I

The God-Experience As Organically Conditioned

IT HAS been the misfortune of many writers to mistake the God-idea for the God-experience. The history and logical relations of various conceptions of God, often utterly inharmonious with each other, have been discussed; their relative significance has been estimated; and then the book has been closed, like the door of a mausoleum, upon a collection of lifeless intellectual gods. Were the God-experience nothing more, it would lie quite contentedly between the covers of the treatises. But it is more than an intellectual conception, however logical and complete. To say nothing of its metaphysical implications, and to consider it psychologically, the God-experience affects and is affected by every element of the mental life, and is vitally conditioned by a great variety of bodily attitudes, sensations of every sort, images in terms of every sense, and various affective relationships. A complete picture of the mental elements involved in a conscious attitude toward God would require a knowledge of many things. To comprehend such a picture would surely be to "know what God and man is." And even if such a picture were procureable, it would be true to only one moment of life, and would be invalidated by the shifting experiences of the next moment. This study does not pretend to give such a picture. It is an attempt to discover the psychological basis for the phenomena involved in thinking of God or sustaining any conscious relation to God. This experience is central in religion, and the problems which it presents are of the highest importance to the psychology of religion.

A thorough study of any mental process reveals complexities which a casual observation may overlook. Even the simplest sensation is conditioned by a complex of feelings, images, and doubtless other sensations, so that it becomes one of the serious problems of experimental psychology so to reduce these competing

THE GOD-EXPERIENCE

*Sense-
Feeling
Com-
plexes*

elements that a sense experience may stand out in relative clearness for purposes of mental analysis. Every experience involves a sense-feeling complex. One element may be so prominent as to give its name to the entire complex, but to treat this single element as constituting the experience is absurd. In many cases the element which names the complex derives its greater significance from other and less conspicuous elements. Let us select one or two concrete examples.

My neighbor, Mrs. Brown, stands watching a marching regiment, and sees her own boy among the khaki-clad men. To casual thought this is a visual experience. She herself says: "I saw my boy." But the experience is far more than vision. It involves a complex of organic and kinesthetic sensations conditioning the feeling aspect of the experience. Her heart beats faster, her breathing is affected, and thousands of inner strains and tensions accompany a multitude of imaginal processes. These constitute the essential, intimate, significant features of the total experience; yet we call it a visual experience, and Mrs. Brown says simply: "I saw my boy." Even in a so-called visual experience which lacks the emotional significance involved in such a personal relationship, vision may be little more than a cue to a total complex. I see from my window an umbrella which a man is carrying along the street. An essential and conspicuous element in this experience is a visual sensation; but the meaning and significance of the experience are conditioned by a great number of other elements, without which the moving black area before my eyes would be totally insignificant. There is motor strain, imaged or real, elicited by the motion of the umbrella, downward strain involving my experience of the weight of an umbrella, and upward strain due to the tugging of the wind. There are images of the tactual and kinesthetic feel of the handle, the ribs, the cover, the sliding ferrule; and probably all these images elicit actual sensations of strain. The complex may also include an olfactory image of the smell of the cloth of a wet umbrella. Beside all these, the experience is conditioned by related images connected with the use of an umbrella, the thermal, tactual and other elements related to rain, feelings of shrinking and shivering, or of the comfort and relaxation of being protected, and a variety of inner strains which add to the total meaning of the word umbrella.

It is clear that even in so distinctly visual an experience as the above there is a blend of factors. We label the experience visual, for it is the visual element in it which distinguishes and sets it off

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from other experiences; but examination makes it clear that there is a relative fictitiousness in calling the experience a visual one. Vision, in this case, may be little more than the key which unlocks a room full of things more valuable than keys. Its relative significance in the complex depends upon my attitude as I look at the umbrella. If I am not interested in umbrellas, the experience may be more dominantly visual than if I desire an umbrella or am about to go out on the rainy street, but in any case the experience is far more than visual. The fiction of sensational discreteness is not without its value, however. A conspicuous element in a complex, even though it may not be the most significant factor, is a convenient tag or symbol. It would take time and extremely close analysis to inform another person, in detail, of the sense-feeling complex centering in the above-mentioned umbrella. But the whole complex, with individual differences, to be sure, comes when I say, "I see an umbrella." Let me repeat that it is not to be inferred that the visual element in this case is of no value. It is at least as essential as a key is to the room which it unlocks, perhaps as essential as the door which not only opens the room but is itself a part of it, but it is not, in many cases, the most significant element, nor in any case the only essential one.

The God-experience involves a great variety of sense-feeling complexes, differing widely according to age, experience, and individual temperament. Some think of God as a material and localizable form, and their whole attitude is involved in this conception. Others think of God as a universal power, and still others as a quiet, pervasive inner presence, and each of these conceptions is conditioned by essentially different attitudes. But in no case is the experience absolutely simple. Its study reveals complexities which may throw some light on the question of chief interest here: what are the more significant and fundamental elements in the God-experience?

An examination of the senses, with reference to their relation to the more significant and meaningful elements in experience seems to warrant a two-fold division. Certain senses appear largely devoted to the externalization of our experiences, setting them apart, analyzing them, articulating them with one another; while other senses seem devoted to the internalization and evaluation of experiences. The line between these two groups is not positive and definite; but in general, the internalizing, intimate senses are those deep-seated senses which are involved in our emotional reactions and feelings and in a great variety of organic processes;

*Two-
fold
Division
of Senses*

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while at the head of the externalizing, articulative senses are sight and hearing, the so-called "higher senses." An example of a borderline instance in this classification is the pressure sense. It contributes to space perception, but may also be involved with the kinesthetic and other senses in the general somatic feeling experiences. However, a dual classification seems best, and we shall use the general terms "*intimate*" senses and "*articulative*" senses, understanding by the latter sight and hearing, especially; and by the former the more deep-seated, inarticulate, bodily senses, especially the organic and kinesthetic senses. Other senses partake, in some degree, the character of both classes. By this classification I do not mean to deny to sight and hearing their part in the evaluation of experiences, certainly not to deny to the intimate senses their place in the cognition of the external, but to indicate the predominant general functions of the various senses.

The essential values are usually unobtrusive. Like the kingdom of heaven they do not come with observation. The highest values we have, æsthetic, ethical, and religious, find their fundamental setting and chief expression in and through the more deep-seated intimate senses and in the feelings and organic reactions related to them. These are like the colorless ingredients of a chemical compound, which are its essential and fundamental components. A small amount of colored fluid may be added, and the whole compound is colored. Therefore you may call it a green fluid, or may even name it for the green ingredient, but the fact remains that the chief elements are the transparent fluids which constitute the larger part of its volume. Similarly in the following chapters there are sense-feeling complexes, forming elements in the God-experience, which may be called visual, or auditory, or tactual. Probably in all of these cases the visual or auditory or tactual element is comparatively insignificant in itself. It is the green fluid that colors the compound. The more essential elements are usually to be found in the organic and relatively diffuse bodily sensations, and in the feelings related to them.

There are several reasons why the articulative senses have been relatively overvalued, even in relation to an experience so fundamentally feelingful as the God-experience. It is a natural corollary of our common mental inertia that we tend to accept the sign for the thing signified. The crown, at first merely incidental to royalty, is dignified until the government is called "the crown." The articulative senses have unlocked so many treasure-houses that we forget that the key can unlock no door by itself, and we value

**Overvaluation
of the
Articulative
Senses**

ORGANICALLY CONDITIONED

the key out of all proportion to its real meaning. There is, however, a real utility in our setting objects off in perspective by the use of sight and hearing. It relieves the mind of what would otherwise be a jumble of experiences. It does not really enlarge our world, but it seems to, and relieves our minds to that extent. It is not essential, even here, as is shown by the cases of Helen Keller and others similarly limited, but it is significant that Miss Keller constantly tries, in her books, to interpret her experiences in terms of the articulative senses. For her, the articulative sense elements are almost altogether fictitious; their value is for her readers who see and hear. Perhaps the chief reason for our overvaluation of the articulative sense experiences is in their use as symbols for social communication. What a visual or auditory image really communicates is a cue to a sense-feeling complex. The sense image, as suggested by a concept, is a draft on my friend's mental banking house. The entire complex is the gold which gives it worth. The visions and voices of Joan of Arc appealed to an age of hard, rigid orthodoxy, but the essential elements of her God-experience were the warm, intimate and vital feelings of relationship, the complexes of sense and feeling, which conditioned her devotion to God and her king.

The intimate senses, especially the organic and kinesthetic senses, contribute their full share to the cognitive phases of consciousness and to the objectifying of the world, but their highest function is in relation to the life of affection, appreciation, and the higher values. The affective consciousness is largely conditioned by the intimate sense functions. The articulative senses, especially vision, seem relatively to hold off, externalize our experiences. The intimate senses, however, add warmth and intimacy even to the sense-feeling complexes which we call articulative sense experiences. They internalize and evaluate; they determine attitudes and apprehend meanings and relationships. They are closely involved in the whole system of bodily mechanisms conditioning affection. Professor Starbuck says:

*The
Evaluat-
ing
Senses*

“There has been a progressive refinement of the mechanism of affection, which has kept pace with that of cognition. The latter has been refined through the agency of the cerebrum and the logical functions. The former has developed through the instrumentality of the sympathetic nervous system and its connections with the special senses, the glands, intestines, and the circulatory system, as the mechanism for

THE GOD-EXPERIENCE

the immediate evaluation of higher experiences as wholesome or unwholesome, good or bad, right or wrong." ¹

The intimate senses differ from the articulative in the immediacy to which Professor Starbuck refers. Sight and hearing may be described as mediating functions. They cannot evaluate the stimulations to which they react, but must refer them to the functions in which the intimate senses have their setting. The intimate senses, however, respond to a situation with an immediate interpretation, a sense of values, a feeling of appreciation. There is a biologic basis for this more immediate response of the intimate senses. They are older and more fundamentally related to the welfare of the organism than the articulative senses. Bergson says: "Doubtless we think with only a small part of our past, but it is with our entire past, including the original bent of our soul, that we desire, will, and act." It might also be said that we see and hear with but a part of our past, while our whole past, since the very beginnings of consciousness, is involved in the intimate functions.

*Objec-
tivity of
the In-
timate
Senses*

In the intimate senses and feelings we recognize the inner and fundamental values through the relative warmth and intimacy of the experiences. There is no such distinct articulation of elements as that which sets other sense qualities off and apart in an apparent, though somewhat artificial, discreteness, but a blending or fusing into one another which makes analysis difficult. This relatively inarticulate nature, however, should not be mistaken for mere subjectivity. All the senses contribute to objectivity. While more intimately personal, and while in some respects dependent upon the articulative senses, the intimate senses contribute a great part of the inner elements of recognition and attitude that make any objective thing significant. The feelings are not merely subjective. Sensations of heat or cold, or feelings of pain or pleasure, have an objective reference and significance. *Something* is cold; *someone* displeases us; and through the intimate sense responses we judge quickly and immediately the value of the external object. In this inner evaluation is the chief significance of the more deep-seated sense and feeling experiences. They report what the racial history of man has to say about values, what is good or bad for the organism, even to the higher recognitions with which this study is chiefly concerned.

In making these distinctions between the two general classes

¹ Intuitionism, *Hastings Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, N. Y., Vol. VII, p. 400.

ORGANICALLY CONDITIONED

of senses, the author does not wish to undervalue what they possess in common. They have more in common than many have supposed. All the senses contribute to our knowledge of the objective and the external, and, on the other hand, all contribute to the feelingful and appreciative phases of consciousness. But vision seems to be at the top of the objectifying series and at the bottom of the internalizing series, and separated from the organic senses by both these lines of gradation. Where I have used the terms articulative and intimate it is not because of any sharply drawn line of distinction, but because they recognize at their extremes very different functions, which differ widely in their significance for the God-experience.

The following chapters, discussing the various sense elements of the God-experience, are based upon a series of questionnaires, involving a large number of papers from public and high-school pupils and university undergraduate and graduate students and faculty members, supplemented by well-considered and authentically reported cases from the literature of the God-experience. The later chapters involve a somewhat general interpretation of the point of view here taken, together with certain extended illustrations and practical conclusions.

*What all
the
Senses
Have in
Common*

*The
Plan of
Succeeding
Chapters*

II

Nominally Visual Experiences

*The
Func-
tions of
Vision*

VISUAL experiences play a great part in our lives. They give us a vast proportion of our knowledge of one another and of the outside world. Through vision we possess information in common, and communicate easily with one another. So important are these functions of vision that they have been considered its chief significance. But in the hierarchy of visual functions, the highest place is taken by another use of vision, according to which a great body of our inner, more intimate experiences is objectified, externalized, concretized, so as to become more commerciable, both for ourselves and others, in symbols. Herein is the prime meaning of the visual in relation to the life of appreciation, æsthetic, religious, or whatever it may be. Even in plastic or graphic art, vision seems to find its chief significance as a handmaid of deeper meanings which it symbolizes. A painting which lacks this subtle appeal to something deep within man is a daub; a painting which possesses it is more than paint and canvas.

*Value of
Visual
Ele-
ments
in the
God-ex-
perience*

In the God-experience vision has an important place. There are many who say that no visual image represents their deepest belief as to what God is, but who nevertheless need the visual to make God seem real and vital to them. In many cases vision is confessedly of very little significance, or none at all. Others are evidently so "eye-minded" that the visual image is always a significant part of the God-experience. The importance of some sort of visual image to such persons cannot be overestimated. But even in these cases, it is unwarranted to say that vision is of higher value in itself than the intimate senses. The finer reactions and attitudes involve the complex mass of bodily sensations, with their imaginal correlates and their warm and vital affective aspects, even when vision is inextricably interwoven with these deep-seated experiences.

The following quotation from the report of a college senior seems to me to contain something like the degree of visual imagery of the average graduate or undergraduate student, as indicated by over two hundred papers which I have received:

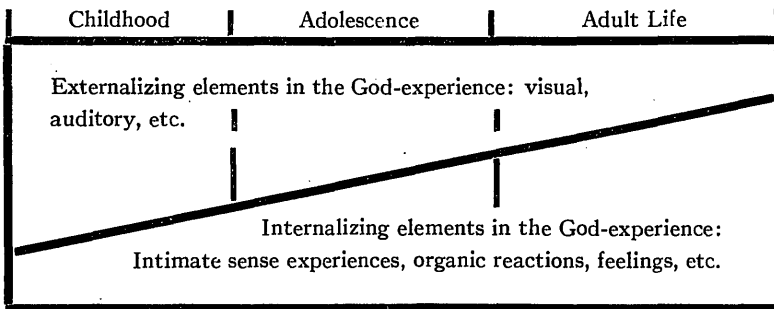
NOMINALLY VISUAL EXPERIENCES

“The thought of God brings to me a sense of vastness, of a something intangible, overshadowing and brooding over me. I have never been able, as far as I can remember, to imagine God as having face or feature. Sometimes, just for a fraction of a second, I seem to have a mental picture of God as a huge, white-robed figure, but I never get as far as any conception of a face whatever,—and even at best this image is very elusive and infrequent. The sense of vastness and of the overshadowing, brooding spirit is intimately bound up with, in fact, I may say inseparable from, my belief in God.”

In the sense of an overshadowing something there is probably a visual element, but there is vastly more here than vision. As will be shown in later chapters, there are normally inner sensations or images of strain connected with such feelings of vastness or intangibility, feelings of expansion in the chest or abdomen, characteristic behavior of the visceral organs, all blended together into the total experience. In many cases the visual imagery, while valued no more highly, is more constant than here. It does not appear to be deeply significant in itself, but its chief function appears to be to focalize and objectify the more significant, fundamental and persistent intimate elements in consciousness.

Visual imagery constitutes, in general, a much greater part in the God-experience of childhood than in that of adult life, while the intimate and internalizing elements acquire greater significance in the process of development. This may be illustrated by the following figure:

Visual Experiences as Modified by Age



The clearly visual element in the God-experience of childhood is doubtless due, in part, to the anthropomorphic conceptions which have been taught to children; but this teaching may itself be due, in part, to a native attitude which normally externalizes and

THE GOD-EXPERIENCE

objectifies childhood experiences. The external world, presented through sight, hearing, and touch reactions, forms a greater part of a child's world than of the adult's. The adolescent is between these two conditions. His world is in process of becoming internalized, and hence there is a great accretion of intimate sense elements which may be hidden, unless carefully searched out, beneath the customary word formulas appropriate to articulative sense experiences. The adult may have visual imagery, but through the processes of adolescence the life of feeling and appreciation, if his development has been normal, has come to its own, and the intimate sense factors of his experiences have become most significant. So far short of being a chief mental factor in the developed mind is visual imagery that Galton found eminent scientists actually inferior in power of visualization to younger people.¹ Of several hundred children, from six to fourteen years of age, of whom I have record, 77 per cent seem to have a clearly visual and anthropomorphic imagery of God. Of 390 students in the San Francisco Girls' High School, who were questioned by Professor Starbuck in 1898, 162 seemed to believe in the possibility of seeing God, having in mind, evidently, a distinctly visual and anthropomorphic imagery. There were 81, however, who seem to think it impossible to see God. During later adolescence, from perhaps 18 to 24, about the usual college age, there seems to be a very noticeable change, visual imagery becoming far less prominent. Of 170 undergraduate students from whom I have reports, only 11 per cent report predominantly visual imagery, such as is common in the reports from children and high-school students, while 35 per cent deny the presence of visual imagery in thinking of God. The remaining 54 per cent have visual imagery, but it is accompanied by intimate sense imagery which is evidently of greater significance. Of a smaller group of advanced students, graduates, and faculty members, 16 per cent describe vivid visual imagery, but in no case does this sort of imagery seem predominant. The statistical value of the above figures is limited, to be sure, but they are not without significance. On the basis of predominantly visual imagery reported, they show the following percentages:

Children	77%
High-school students	72%
College students	11%
Advanced students	0%

¹ James, *Psychology*, Briefer course, N. Y., 1905, p. 303.

NOMINALLY VISUAL EXPERIENCES

Admitting that there is much unreported imagery of other sorts in the cases of children and high-school students, blended into the visually identified sense-feeling complexes, it is evident that visual imagery is of relatively greater prominence in childhood than in later years. The God-experience becomes internalized as one approaches adult life, and the visual elements in imagery lose their vividness. But the visual imagery of childhood is not altogether spontaneous. Of the 170 undergraduates above mentioned, 139 recall a distinctly visual and anthropomorphic imagery of God which they had in childhood. All but 22 of these attribute this imagery, wholly or in part, to pictures seen in childhood; and none attributes it to anything other than the direct or indirect teaching of older people. To be sure, these testimonies based on memory are not the most trustworthy, but their unanimity on this point may be significant. They seem to indicate that educational methods may have something to do with a child's imagery of God.

In very many cases visual imagery is contingent on other mental factors, involved in moods, attitudes, and feelings. It is reported by several students to be clearest when they are "in a sad mood," or have been doing something wrong, or "feel the need of him most strongly." One says: "Sometimes when I am very tired, a mental picture of an understanding father's face seems to flash and disappear." There are those who find that the visual image vanishes when they try to analyze it with reference to their belief, and, although appearing first, is less persistent than other types of imagery. Others find that the visual image "adds a sort of reality and assurance" to the experience, and feel that they "must attribute human form and features" to him before they can really believe in him. To one person this visual image is necessary "when it is hard to believe anything," but at other times constitutes no part of the imagery. It is evident from an inspection of these cases that the visual imagery, while important, is not considered the fundamental thing. It accompanies and is conditioned by moods and feelings which doubtless involve a variety of sense factors.

*Visual
Experiences
Contingent on
Affective
States*

To those who have a visual image of an anthropomorphic God, whose face they can see, God's face appears stern or kindly according to personal attitudes which involve many non-visual elements of sense and feeling. Thus 139 students who recall a distinctly anthropomorphic imagery describe the face of the imaged God as follows:

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Kindly.....	55
Stern.....	17
Sometimes kindly and sometimes stern. . .	14
Not indicating.....	53

While these factors are not so clearly stated in the cases of present visual anthropomorphisms, it is evident that they also are affected by feelings of personal attitude.

*Visual
Imagery
Affected
by In-
timate
Sense
Reac-
tions*

Reference has been made to the relatively high significance of the more vaguely anthropomorphic imagery. In the cases which I have studied this is frequently connected with intimate sense imagery, often shading almost imperceptibly into it. One man says: "There remains with me yet an image of God with a human body, but when I meditate upon God he loses this human form and merges into all things." This man has a rich variety of imagery, including very vivid motor and tactual images involved in his attitude toward God. Many seem to see a face very dimly, which is surrounded with light, sometimes soft and hazy, and in other cases intensely bright. This may involve thermal imagery or a variety of inner tensions. There may be a similar feeling in the case of one who says of a visual image of God that "there is something ethereal and airy and light, as though he might, with very little effort, glide up and up." In the latter case the accompanying non-visual experiences are clearly described: "A sort of relaxation is felt all over my body and I not only forget my pain and sorrow but seem to pass into a different world which seems so much larger and greater than our own." Feelings of relaxation, buoyancy, expansion, are, as will be shown later, of great significance in the God-experience of many people, and here it is seen that they may be closely associated with what appears to be a highly significant visual imagery.

In many cases the visual element in imagery is extremely tenuous and indefinite. One paper describes no other visual imagery than "heated atmosphere." Another man, a practiced scientific observer, can only say that his visual imagery is "expansiveness." These latter persons have a visual imagery, but it is too indefinite to be expressed by itself, and in its significance is evidently subordinate to intimate sense experiences. A young man writes the following apparent absurdity, which is, after all, a clear illustration of an attempt to express a complicated experience in terms of vision:

"I frequently visualize God as an invisible presence, if that is not impossible. I really do, though,

NOMINALLY VISUAL EXPERIENCES

in such a case, put God out there over the fields and woods placing invisible hands on the scene. It seems paradoxical to speak of having an image of an invisible thing, but that is true in my case."

A somewhat different imagery seems involved in the experience of a young woman who has "only a sense of a vague, distant something," and who has a feeling of "littleness" as an element in the total experience. Another woman says: "God always appears to me as clothed in a misty light. Gray is the only color seen. I have this image after his power has been brought to me." The predominance of motor or other intimate sense imagery in these cases is clear, as also in the case of a man who reports the following interesting experiences:

"My imagery consists mainly, I think, in a feeling of movement outward . . . accompanied by a feeling of tension or effort associated with the movement. . . . If I have a visual image in connection with the other feeling of movement I spoke of, it is very indistinct. It is a level surface of earth, supposed to represent nature or the universe, but having no natural objects standing out clear and distinct within it."

Quite another type of imagery is associated with the visual elements in the following experience which a young woman recalls from her childhood:

"My first idea of God, if I can trust my memory, is that of a something about the size and shape of the big arm chair in our bedroom. It was dark in color and very soft, and you could crawl inside and be so comfortable. . . . It had life, or at least a sort of ceaseless motion."

An examination of many accounts of the God-experience indicates that a similar blending of intimate sense images with those of vision is very common.

III

Nominally Auditory Experiences

*The Intimate
Connections of
Audition*

MUCH that has been said of visual experiences applies equally to auditory. Their chief significance is in their relation to the life of appreciation, and this is conditioned by the activity of the deep-seated sense experiences and the involved feelings. But in several respects hearing seems to lie nearer to the intimate senses than vision. It was probably of earlier development than either sight, taste, or smell, and hence is biologically nearer the less localized intimate sense experiences. This near relationship is indicated by the fact that the organ of hearing is practically continuous with that of equilibrium, the same fluid flowing through the semi-circular canals and the cochlea. The value of this near relationship is indicated by the functions of audition in human as well as sub-human experience. Audition has had a biological relation to quick action. Vocal and other audible signals, danger calls, sex calls, etc., have demanded an immediate intimate sense response; while sight, on the other hand, has been the long-range sense, allowing time for comparison and reasoning, and more indirectly connected with the more deep-seated senses.

More significant, however, are the relations which have been discovered through experiments, between audition and the bodily conditions and functions with which the intimate senses are closely related. The experiments of Feré have shown the influence of various sense stimuli upon work and fatigue. Under the influence of certain odors, thermal conditions, colored illumination, etc., a subject is able to accomplish more work with the ergograph than without such stimulations. Other sense stimuli, on the contrary, may have a depressing effect. The influence of sounds upon work is very marked. In a series of four experiments, the first with normal conditions, and the others accompanied by the sounds of brass instruments, the gain in work accomplished, measured in ergograms, was, for the second, third, and fourth experiments, respectively, 9.86, 50.76, and 56.29 per cent over the work accomplished in the first experiment. In a similar series, but with two drums instead of the brasses, the respective gains were: 58.46,

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79.88, and 181.28 per cent.¹ It is this sort of stimulation which constitutes the value of martial music. The sound of bugle and drum elicits a response, not merely from the auditory apparatus, but from a nervous mechanism throughout the body. That something more fundamental than association in experience relates musical stimuli to responsive organs throughout the body is indicated by the experiments of Feré and Jaell upon a subject who, although tone-deaf, was more highly stimulated to muscular movements by a tone interval of a major second than by that of a minor second, while chords in certain keys proved quite consistently to be more stimulating than those in other keys. From this it appears that there is a direct connection between the hearing of a tone and the organic response that makes music so powerful a stimulant.

Féré has also shown that the power to continue muscular movements is notably increased if the movements are made in small, rhythmical groups.² Thus rhythm, which is consciously involved in many auditory experiences, and unconsciously in all, is found to be an important element in nervous processes throughout the body. As Wundt has said, "consciousness is rhythmically disposed, because the whole organism is rhythmically disposed."³ Helen Keller, though unable to hear a sound, can enjoy music, through the bodily vibrations taken up by sensitive organs throughout the body, and in all cases the "music consciousness involves a mass of kinesthetic and organic sensations, and various affective relationships, beside the mere operation of auditory functions."⁴

The significance of audition in the God-experience is in great degree due to the social value of the voice. Speech is a chief index of social relationships, and it is natural that God, who comes to us in terms of social judgments, in response to the social demands of human nature, should be heard, either in the sounds of nature, in the voices of our fellows, or in the still, small voice of the heart. *Vox populi, vox Dei*, is thus significant of the social nature of the God-experience, as also are all references to inner voices or the voice of conscience. These values, however, have a deeper lying basis than custom and social history. They are involved in the close relationship between audition and the deep-lying bodily senses. Music is the handmaid of religion because its tone and rhythm awaken something deep within us. It quiets or it thrills us, it

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¹ Feré, *Travail et Plaisir*, Paris, 1904, p. 110.

² *Op. cit.*, p. 42.

³ Wundt, *Introduction to Psychology*, Trans. by Rudolph Pintner, London, 1912, p. 5.

⁴ Weld, *Psychology of Musical Enjoyment*, *Amer. Journal of Psychology*, 1912, Vol. XXIII, p.

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calms or it energizes us, because it sets in motion complex inner mechanisms of the body, which react in these various ways upon the mind. Hence musical appreciation and the God-experience are frequently so related as to be practically inseparable. As will be shown in a later chapter, affective reactions to music are frequently indistinguishable from a God-experience, and many have described the same sort of ecstatic feelings induced by music as are characteristic of ecstatic mystical states.

Aside from direct reaction to music, to which the significance of a God-experience may be attached, there seems to be, in the average experience, less auditory than visual imagery with relation to God. Mystics have valued the voices and other auditory experiences which have come to them, for themselves alone, but in the imagery of the people whose introspections I have studied, auditory imagery appears secondary to other elements in the total experience. One man, whose auditory imagery is usually faint, reports the following experience:

"An experience which I can recall, though I have not had it recently, is a very vivid auditory imagery of distant music which seems to come from somewhere above me. This is accompanied by a feeling of lightness and buoyancy and motor tensions upward."

Others have confessed to similar experiences, which are probably not uncommon. The elements which seem most persistent here are the organic and kinesthetic accompaniments of the auditory experience. There are others who describe an "inner voice" as a part of their imagery. In at least one case, the quality of the auditory image, "a rich, low voice," enters into the experience. That these experiences are not necessarily altogether auditory is indicated by one young woman who describes "a gentle voice heard within, or rather felt than heard because of the quiet softness of it." In some cases thunder or other sounds of nature, or such music as "harps and cornets," have become associated with the God-experience. There are some who mention that God, to them, seems silent.

Auditory imagery seems to have a larger place in the God-experience of children than in that of adults. There are a number of persons who recall that God was to them in childhood the controller of the thunder, which was produced in various ingeniously conceived ways, as by God's wagon, by a rolling-pin rolled across the sky, or by a stick with which God struck the floor of heaven.

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Involved with the auditory imagery of our religious literature one may find rich veins of intimate sense imagery. Naturally songs and hymns to be sung contain striking auditory elements, but does not something beside the ear respond to such a verse as:

"The voice of Jehovah is upon the waters:
The God of glory thundereth?"

Thunder, at least to many people, means not mere sound, but the strains and chest tensions and shrinking, with accompanying sense elements involved in fear, or at least awe. It is more than a noise—it is a big, expansive sort of sound, and it brings a complex of inner strains, differing with each individual, but none the less significant.

Mystical writers refer often to an inner voice as well as an inner light. Suso says: "His bodily senses being stilled, a voice spoke within him."¹ Brother Lawrence speaks of "an actual presence of God; or, to speak better, an habitual, silent, and secret conversation of the soul with God,"² while Fenelon says: "In the deep stillness of the soul we may perceive the ineffable voice of the Bridegroom. We must lend an attentive ear, for his voice is soft and still, and is only heard of those who listen for nothing else."³ This seems to be more than a mere figure of speech. It seems to represent, in some fashion, an actual experience of many of the mystics. What is present in this silent conversation is not sound, is not merely an imaged sound, but a complex including the inner experiences which are normally correlated with sound, and which might mark an actual conversation with one toward whom one stood in an attitude of awe and worship.

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¹ Connell, *A Book of Devotional Readings from the Literature of Christendom*, London, 1913, p. 88.

² *Ib.* 313 f.

³ *Ib.* 176 f.

IV

The Pressure Sense in Relation to the God-Experience

IN THE cutaneous sense of pressure we have a clear illustration of the intermingling of sense experiences which modify and reinforce one another. Sensations and images of pressure enter into the God-experience of many people, but, as in most of our so-called tactual experiences, temperature and strain, at least, may be involved. Nearly half of the advanced students report a feeling of a near presence, "a feeling that God is very near, as when one is near a dear friend whom he can put out his hand and touch. One does not really touch him but nevertheless one feels him close beside."

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This feeling of a near presence is frequently conditioned by mood or circumstance. To one student this feeling comes when she is in "a sad mood." Another thus describes it:

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To another young woman the experience comes suddenly in times of danger:

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The commonness of this type of experience might be demonstrated by extensive quotations from religious literature. Proclus, for example, says that "every perfect spiritual contact and communion is owing to the presence of God," while Saint Theresa describes her experience as follows:

"Jesus Christ seemed to be by my side continually, and, as the vision was not imaginary, I saw no form; but I had a most distinct feeling that he was always on my right hand, a witness of all I did; and never at any time, if I was but slightly recollected, or not too much distracted, could I be ignorant of his near presence."¹

¹ Underhill, *Mysticism*, Second edition, London, 1911, p. 341.

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Allowing for the cases in which God's nearness or remoteness may be dominantly figurative, and symbolical, there are evidently actual sense images, with actual neural co-ordinates, behind such confessions as the above. And that they are not without significance is indicated by the writings of Brother Lawrence and Jeremy Taylor, both of whom wrote on "The Practice of the Presence of God." Tactual imagery has amounted to actual hallucination in some cases, as that of the girl mentioned in Chapter III, who said: "Sometimes when I had been good angels came and touched me." While not strictly a God-experience, this is of the same nature, as the angel was a direct supernatural representative of God. Such was also the case of Joan of Arc, who testified to actual physical contact with Saint Margaret and Saint Catherine, when they appeared to her in visions. Baron von Huegel mentions the significant place of touch in the experience of Saint Catherine of Genoa, and says that "'contact,' 'touch,' said of God's action upon the soul,—a conception so intensely active in Catherine's mind and life, is again a favorite term with Dionysius and Proclus."¹ The imagery of being touched, upheld, or led by the hand, has its place in the experience of many. Several students mention a feeling of being upheld, and religious literature presents many examples of such an experience. Thus the Psalms represent God as upholding his people. "Jehovah upholdeth the righteous." In more modern days Charles Wesley sings: "I find him lifting up my head," which may be figurative, but which, no doubt, involves an imagery that is tactual as well as motor. As to the imagery involved in the grasping of the hand, a writer in the Psalms exclaims in his prayer: "Thou hast holden my right hand"; while the Vedic hymn writer thus addresses his divinities: "When will you take us as a dear father takes his son by both hands, O ye gods?" And Augustine's petition is similar—"that I may love thee entirely, and grasp thy hand."² There are tactual elements also in the use of many words common to religious expression, such as hard, soft, dry, moist, dull, sharp, smooth, and rough. In various ways these words and the underlying sense imagery are involved in the expressions of the God-experience.

The significance of tactual elements in the God-experience resembles that of visual and auditory elements, in that it is largely in the externalization of more deeply rooted feelings of relationship. In fact, our so-called touch experiences are so involved with the

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ences** senses having their seat in the deeper-lying tissues as to be difficult of isolation. In our common experience sensations of inner strain are referred outward in what Titchener calls "touch-blends," and these sensations in peripheral muscles, joints, and tendons, are closely related with the organic sensations and the general bodily feeling-tone. Resistance felt internally is referred externally, and we say an object is hard or soft. A similar external reference takes place when the God-experience involves tactual factors. Inner strains are interpreted as originating in an external presence, an upholding or guiding hand. Beside this, it should be remembered that all sense experiences are modified by the general feeling-tone of the body, which involves the deeper bodily sensations, and that the pressure sense, as shown above, is closely related to these latter sensations.

Gustatory and Olfactory Reactions

IN THE higher type of religious literature there is frequently found a refined imagery in terms of the senses of taste and smell. In another type of literature one finds a relatively coarse imagery in similar terms. Just how much of the actual sense elements is involved in the frequent use of taste or smell words in religious literature is difficult to determine. Doubtless the elements of the Lord's Supper became a symbol to the early Christian Church of the satisfactions of the God-life, and hence made taste imagery more significant; and doubtless also the customs of burnt sacrifices and incense have reacted in a figurative use of olfactory imagery. Still these senses appear to have more than a formal significance in the God-experience. Their significance is little recognized, it is true; but this may be due to the high degree of refinement which this type of imagery may have undergone. I find but few students who report any imagery of these types whatever in the description of the God-experience. One man "can image certain things pertaining to God in terms of the taste sense, such as the cup of woe bring bitter," but such imagery is far from being dominant in his experience. And one young woman "associates God with a sweet, delicate, pure odor." Various scents in nature constitute a part in the God-experience of many of us whose early years were spent in the open country or beside the sea, but these elements in our experience appear generally to be submerged in the mass of sense elements in consciousness.

Gustatory and Olfactory Experiences

Eating and drinking seem to be closely connected with the God-experience in many parts of the Bible, especially the Psalms. "Taste and see that Jehovah is good." Those who are faithful to Jehovah are abundantly satisfied with fatness, are given food to the full, drink of the river of pleasures, take the cup of salvation, find Jehovah the portion of their cup, and find his judgments sweeter than honey and the honey-comb. The association of Jehovah with fruits and harvests made such imagery fitting and natural. To the Hebrew the land of Canaan was "a land flowing with milk and honey," and it was the land which Jehovah had blessed. Likewise the Vedic Hymns recognize the gods as givers of food. Since the

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rain is necessary to growing crops, there is surely more than a far-fetched figure in the praise of the Maruts, the Storm-gods:

“You pour out your honey-like fatness (the rain) for him who praises you.”¹

Another Vedic hymn thus praises Indra:

“O Indra, a thousand have been thy helps accorded to us: a thousand, O driver of the bays, have been thy most delightful viands.”²

There is a very rich gustatory imagery in the writings of the medieval mystics. Thus Ruysbroeck says:

“There flow in this communion rivers of honey full of all delight; for the spirit tastes of these delights under every mode that can be imagined.”³

John Smith, who lived in the seventeenth century, is of the same mystical spirit, and states the God-experience in gustatory terms:

“Neither do our wills embrace anything without some latent sense of Him, whereby they can taste and discern how near everything comes to that Self-existent Good they seek after; and indeed without such an internal sensating faculty as this is we should never know when our souls are in conjunction with the Deity, or be able to relish the ineffable sweetness of true happiness.”⁴

Many modern hymns bring to us gustatory imagery in such terms as “Bread of our souls,” and in such lines as these:

“Angelic spirits, countless souls,
Of thee have drunk their fill;
And to eternity will drink
Thy joy and glory still.”⁵

Much of the olfactory imagery of the Bible is of a highly refined sort, but through much of the nature poetry of the Old Testament blows the scent of fruits and flowers and the fields of mown grass. The Vedic Hymns are rich in olfactory imagery, as also are the poems of that modern Indian bard, whose works so vividly suggest these ancient songs, Rabindranath Tagore.

Mohammedan literature reeks with odors. Mohammed himself

¹ Mueller, F. Max, *Vedic Hymns* (translation), *The Sacred Books of the East*, Vol. XXXII Oxford, 1891, p. 159.

² *Ib.*, p. 272.

³ Underhill, *op. cit.*, p. 318.

⁴ Connell, *op. cit.*, p. 165.

⁵ *The Methodist Hymnal*, New York, 1905, p. 61.

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seems to have been remarkably sensitive to odor. Certain smells were so offensive to him that they brought on attacks of convulsions. The scents in which the Mohammedan revels are not always those which are most pleasant to Occidental nostrils, but the Mohammedan Paradise is fragrant with roses and perfumes, while the houri who await the faithful in that fragrant country "are made of pure musk, and odoriferous exhalations of the same perfume regale the nostrils of the faithful throughout eternity."¹

Olfactory imagery plays so great a part in the experiences of medieval mystics that there are cases, apparently well established, of olfactory hallucination. The following is an extract from the report of the trial of Joan of Arc:

"Did you ever kiss or embrace Saint Catherine or Saint Margaret?"

"I have embraced them both."

"Did they smell sweet?"

"It is good to know that they smelled sweet."²

It is said of Saint Catherine of Genoa that "she perceived, on the (right) hand of her confessor, an odor which penetrated her very heart," and "which abode with her and restored both mind and body for many days." It is also said that "the Bread from heaven, having within it all manner of delight, is already connected in her mind with an impression of sweet odour."³ Saint Bernardino, in a sermon, pictured Mary in heaven, "surrounded by angels, apostles, martyrs, and confessors, all of whom encircle and envelop her with sweet odours."⁴ Many more instances of odors involved in the God-experience and related experiences might be given, such as the foul smells that Swedenborg describes as associated with his strange visions,⁵ or the fairy visions of Saint Rose of Lima,⁶ who found the flowers opening that they might praise God by scenting the air. In the finer imagery of the more highly developed devotional literature smell is less conspicuous. Perhaps as civilization advances the sense of smell is modified. But we can still appreciate Rutherford when he says: "How sweet is the wind that blows out of the quarter where Christ is!"⁷ or the hymn writer who writes of "the incense of the heart," or of "Sharon's dewy rose."

¹ Woods, *In Spite of Epilepsy*, New York, 1913, p. 96.

² James, Grace, *Joan of Arc*, New York, 1910, p. 262, also p. 75.

³ Von Huegel, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 17 f., also Vol. I, p. 184.

⁴ Thureau-Dangin, *Life of Saint Bernardino of Siena*, p. 193.

⁵ Knuth, *Thesis*, University of Iowa, 1909; *The Dreams of Swedenborg*, p. 38.

⁶ Underhill, *op. cit.*, p. 313.

⁷ Connell, *op. cit.*, p. 296.

VI

Thermal Sense Experiences

IN CONSIDERING temperature we come closer to the inner springs of feeling experiences. In various emotions the body responds by vascular changes which are accompanied by thermal sensations. There are two distinguishable types of thermal experiences with reference to God: those in which heat or cold is objectified as external to ourselves, and those in which the temperature elements are felt to be within us and not externalized. The latter experiences may deeply affect our reactions to other elements in the God-experience, and are probably actually fundamental to the experiences involved in externalized temperature.

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Illustrations of religious systems in which God is represented under the figure of fire are familiar to all. A large proportion of the Jewish children and college students who have reported on their conception of God have an image of fire, sometimes of "a mountain in fire." In these cases and those of many who think of God as being surrounded by intensely bright light, there is doubtless a mixture of visual and thermal elements, to say nothing of other factors in the complex. One student distinctly describes warmth and also a "white radiation" as coming from God. That imagery of this sort has been very significant in religion is seen in a great variety of Biblical imagery, in the Vedic pictures of the Storm-gods, "blazing in their strength, brilliant like fires," and in the vivid imagery of medieval mystics.

That a feeling of cold may be involved, directly or indirectly, in the God-experience, may be indicated by the case of one young woman in whom a dread of death seems to involve a fear of being cut off from the warmth of life. At any rate, Maeterlinck, writing of that mystical conception, the plane of reality in which union with God takes place, describes a wierdly cold region:

"Here we stand suddenly at the confines of human thought, and far beyond the Polar circle of the mind. It is intensely cold here; it is intensely dark; and yet you will find nothing but flames and light. But to those who come without having trained their souls to these new perceptions, this light and these

THERMAL SENSE EXPERIENCES

flames are as dark and as cold as if they were painted. Here we are concerned with the most exact of sciences: with the exploration of the harshest and most uninhabitable headlands of the divine 'Know thyself:' and the midnight sun reigns over that rolling sea where the psychology of man mingles with the psychology of God."¹

Swedenborg's visions included various regions of heat and cold. In one place he describes a place so far away from the divine source of warmth that the inhabitants "must labor and split wood to acquire warmth."

An experience of inner warmth seems to characterize a large proportion of the introspections of advanced students. This may be like a steady flame, "neither flaring up or dying down, but remaining constant," or it may be contingent upon one's mood, as in the case of a young woman who says: "I often have a feeling of warmth within after something pleasant has happened, and often after I have had the blues for a long time, I gradually begin to have a feeling that God is near, and the sad feeling passes away and a feeling of comfort and warmth takes its place." Two men report a duality of experiences which seems to run through all their imagery. Each sustains two very different attitudes toward God, corresponding to the two conceptions of God; as a kindly, fatherly friend, and as a strict and uncompromising judge. One attitude involves a feeling of inner warmth, the other an indifferent feeling or a sense of cold. Experiences of inner warmth appear to approach an abnormal extreme in some of the mystics, for example, Saint Catherine of Genoa, who suffered from a nervous disease to which she and her contemporaries gave the significance of a God-experience. Her biographer writes of "that feeling of mostly interior, but later on also of exterior, warmth, indeed often of intense heat and burning, which comes to her, the first as though sunshine were bathing her within and without, the second sometimes as though a great fire were enveloping her, and sometimes as though a living flame were piercing her within."²

But such extreme cases owe their significance to their relation to normal experiences. In general a vital God-experience has involved a feeling of warmth, which we express by such terms as "warm hearts," or "fervent desires." Rolle tells of "the soul with love set afire," and the mind being "kindled in Love Everlasting," while the writer of the classic hymn, the *Stabat Mater*, prays:

¹ Underhill, *op. cit.*, p. 405.

² Von Huegel *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 178.

THE GOD-EXPERIENCE

"Make my soul to glow and melt." Our modern hymns preserve the same imagery when they sing of incense flames arising from the altar of the heart, or of love that is pure, warm, and changeless, or describe prayer as

"The motion of a hidden fire
That trembles in the breast."

Summary ✕ In the preceding chapters the complexity of the experiences which we commonly identify as relating to single senses has been shown. That which we call a visual experience with relation to God has been found to involve other factors, the reactions of the intimate senses being of greatest significance as giving value to the entire complex. A similar relativity has been discovered in the case of auditory experiences, although the auditory element is biologically and functionally nearer the intimate senses and hence admits of a more immediate organic response to stimulation. The tactual sense has been found to be inextricably interwoven with other sense functions, its significance in the God-experience being chiefly in these intimate connections. Gustatory and olfactory experiences have been significant in earlier times, and, in a more completely sublimated form, are probably still more meaningful for us. Thermal elements lie close to the more deeply intimate senses, although they have a decided objective reference. Further allusion to thermal experiences will be made in a later chapter, showing their relation to the heart and the vascular system. The fundamental element in all these experiences is not their objective report so much as their connection with the more general organic and kinesthetic functions which contribute to the feelings of value and meaning. In the following chapters will be discussed some of the complexes in which the reactions of the organic and kinesthetic senses are more clearly seen.

VII

Experiences in Which Organic Reactions Are Prominent

IT IS not without reason that the heart is the physical symbol for the soul, for the heart and all the functions controlled by the vaso-motor system are most intimately involved in the God-experience. To say that our hearts are warm or full or heavy is not to use a mere figure of speech. The rapidity of the heart-beat, the tensions of arterial muscles, and many more phenomena of the vascular system contribute noticeably to condition all our states of consciousness, and especially those involved in unusually feelingful reactions.

*Experiences
Involving the
Heart
and
Vaso-
motor
System*

Apparently the limitations of language have forced the expression of certain heart experiences in the language common to tactual experiences. Certain characteristic tensions and relaxations in the heart muscles doubtless have a large part in these experiences, and there may be blended with them sensations originating in the tissues about the stomach and lungs, which are referred to the heart. The significant fact is that there are sensations which affect these experiences, and that these sensations or related images or both are important in the God-experience. Hard hearts or soft hearts symbolize attitudes toward God, in both Hebrew and Christian literature, and actual strains in the heart muscles may have been involved in the history of these terms. Likewise there may be sense elements involved in the figures of heart purification, the heart being washed and made clean. In the hymns there is frequent mention of hearts of stone and stubborn or hard hearts.

?

Bodily temperature being very closely related to metabolism and pulse-rate, which are stimulated in the processes of emotion, it is not strange that the descriptions of the God-experience frequently involve temperature feelings in connection with the heart and blood vessels. Thus the two disciples at Emmaus exclaimed: "Did not our hearts burn within us?" Both Biblical and later Christian writers have described hearts melting like wax, and Rolle insists that his heart, in a mystical experience, grew warm, "truly, not imaginably, but as it were with a sensible fire." Throughout our Christian devotional literature one may find many references to cold or warm hearts in descriptions of attitudes toward God.

*Vascular
Thermal
Experiences*

THE GOD-EXPERIENCE

Bearing in mind that the heart is frequently used in a symbolic or figurative sense, we may still believe that there are inner strains and feelings which give special significance to many of the heart experiences which devotional writers describe. Broken or wounded hearts are mentioned again and again in the Psalms and in Christian literature. Hearts are full, or they overflow; they are weak, or strong, or restless; they are divided, or wounded, or rent asunder; or they are at rest, united, or fixed; they swell, are enlarged, are elevated, are lifted up, or bound with joy. A student, in referring to certain highly emotional experiences, says: "My heart almost feels as if it were going to jump out of my body." These and many more expressions seem to indicate a greater significance than that of merely symbolic relations.

*Signifi-
cance of
Heart
Symbol-
ism*

Experimental studies have made it clear that the functions of the heart and vascular system are of great significance in emotional states. Cannon, Crile, and others have shown that the secretion of the adrenal glands is increased in emotion, and that this substance not only hastens the coagulation of the blood, but also stimulates the muscles of the heart. Cannon's studies confirm the statement that "adrenin has a well-known stimulating effect on the isolated heart—causing an increase both in the rate and the amplitude of cardiac contraction";¹ and shows "that adrenin has also another action, a very remarkable action, that of restoring to a muscle its original ability to respond to stimulation, after that has been largely lost by continued activity through a long period. What rest will do only after an hour or more, adrenin will do in five minutes or less."² This substance is so closely involved in the phenomena of emotion that it is possible, under experimental conditions, by injecting adrenin into the circulation of an animal, to induce all the symptoms of violent rage. That emotions are accompanied by accelerated pulsation, changes in vascular tension, and the redistribution of the blood supply, is further shown by the studies of Mosso, Binet, Henri, and others, and these changes also affect the bodily temperature through "internal friction."³ In cases of strong emotion these modifications are very marked, for they represent the bodily mechanism for meeting an unusual situation for which the usual co-ordinations are inadequate. Even in the case of so mild an emotion as embarrassment there is a distinct vaso-constriction.⁴ The sensations in the cutaneous

*Heart
Stimu-
lation
and
Emo-
tions*

¹ Cannon, *Bodily Changes in Pain, Hunger, Fear and Rage*, New York, 1916, p. 201.

² *Ib.*, p. 133.

³ Martin, *The Human Body*, New York, 1890, p. 229.

⁴ Angell and Thompson, *Organic Processes and Consciousness*, *Psychological Review*, Vol. VI, pp. 32 ff.

ORGANIC REACTIONS ARE PROMINENT

organs of temperature affected by vascular conditions, in the tissues surrounding the heart, or in the heart itself, constitute a part of the emotional experience. And so varied are these sensations that they account, very largely, for the expressions which have become associated with the heart in our religious literature.

The studies of Binet, Henri, Angell, and others indicate a close relationship between the heart phenomena described above and respiration. The emotions which involve vascular changes also involve respiratory modifications. So closely connected are these functions that the sensations originating in the circulatory and respiratory mechanisms are frequently confused, and this complication of sensations in the chest may affect the use of the heart and lungs in descriptions of the God-experience. So when the writer of the thirty-eighth Psalm says: "My heart panteth;" it is not certain that the word heart is used merely as a symbol. The experience seems to be one not uncommon as a factor in strong emotion. The significance of the prayer, "As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee," is largely in its direct appeal to the sense-feelings involved in the emotional state suggested. The common association of respiratory functions with divine influence, God's breath in man, inspiration, the use of words meaning breath or air for spirit,—all these seem to indicate that men have felt characteristic respiratory tensions in the God-experience. And when a hymn writer pictures the soul "in breathless adoration," she relies upon our actual feeling of breathlessness, at some worshipful time in our lives, to make her imagery real and vital for us.

*Respira-
tory
Experi-
ences*

VIII

Hunger and Thirst Experiences

*The
Signifi-
cance of
Hunger
and
Thirst
Imagery*

THE value of religious symbolism has often been impaired by its treatment as logical analogy. The imagery of hunger has been very conspicuous in accounts of religious experience, but it has often been considered merely a convenient, if somewhat arbitrary symbol of the higher desires of the soul. The hunger and thirst after righteousness, however, is a refinement of the same instinct that leads to the search for bodily nutriment. An infant does not hunger after righteousness, but his food hunger is supplemented by an increasing number of desires, the fulfillment of which will contribute to the fullness of his life; and in adolescence, if all is well, he will probably find a craving, which is made powerful by its instinctive history, for the realities of the moral and spiritual life. In the experiences of hunger there are certain sensations of strain, accompanying the rhythmic contractions of the stomach.¹ Carlson, in his recent and thorough studies of hunger, concludes that the so-called tactile sensibility of the stomach mucosa "may not originate in the mucosa but in the muscularis (tonus relaxation through reflex inhibition) or possibly in the visceral peritoneum."² He holds, however, that the mucosa is possessed of warmth and cold nerve-endings of the protopathic type.³ The characteristic sensations of fullness or satiety are caused by tensions on the muscular coat of the stomach.⁴ The chief factor in the hunger complex is the stomach contraction, which is so closely associated with other vital processes as to affect rhythmically the reflex excitability of the central nervous system, the heart beat, and the general tone of the vaso-motor system.⁵

In the more refined and sublimated aspects of hunger there are sense reactions apparently similar in kind to those of the fundamental food hunger, and these are among the more significant sense elements in the God-experience. Concerning the large place of hunger and thirst in religious description, William James says:

"Religious language clothes itself in such poor
symbols as our life affords, and the whole organism

¹ Cannon, *op. cit.*, Chap. XIII.

² Carlson, Anton Julius, *The Control of Hunger in Health and Disease*, Chicago, 1916, p. 104.

³ *Ib.*, p. 111.

⁴ *Ib.*, p. 112.

⁵ *Ib.*, Chap. V.

HUNGER AND THIRST EXPERIENCES

gives overtones of comment whenever the mind is strongly stirred to expression. Language drawn from eating and drinking is probably as common in religious literature as is language drawn from the sex life. We 'hunger and thirst' after righteousness; we 'find the Lord a sweet savor,' we 'taste and see that he is good.' 'Spiritual milk for American babes, drawn from the breasts of both testaments,' is a subtitle of the once-famous New England Primer, and Christian literature indeed quite floats in milk, thought of from the point of view, not of the mother, but of the greedy babe."¹

Ritualistic and symbolic eating and drinking have been of such widespread observance as to be highly significant. The origin of sacrifices of food or drink, which constitute a great element in the worship of many peoples, has been traced by many writers to the propitiation of divinities. While this has been a factor in the history of sacrifice, there seems to be a more fundamental reason for sacrifice in the social significance of eating and drinking. Among various peoples eating together represents a definite bond of friendship. From the ancient Hebrews to the modern Moors, compacts of friendship have been sealed in this way.² The same social impulse which has had a great part in the development of the God-idea has related this significance of the common meal with the growing conception of God. In some cases the god himself, represented by a totem, has been eaten, and thus has communicated his strength or virtue to the eater;³ in others the meal was shared with the god, who is thus included in a covenant of friendship.⁴ Regard for a divinity doubtless prompted the food offerings,⁵ while a conception of the divine origin of fruits and harvests has also emphasized the social relationship of gods and men. The participation of the gods in eating and drinking has been the belief of many peoples. Westermarck says:

*The
Social
Element
in
Hunger
Experi-
ences*

"According to early beliefs, supernatural beings are subject to human needs. The gods of the heathen Siberians labored for their subsistence, engaged in hunting and fishing, and laid up provisions of roots against times of dearth. When the heavens appear checkered with white clouds on a blue surface, the Maoris of New Zealand say that the god is planting

¹ James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, New York, 1902, p. 11.

² Genesis 26: 30; 31: 46; 2 Sam. 3: 20ff; Joshua 9: 14ff; Westermarck, *The Origin and Development of the Moral Ideas*, London, 1908, Vol. II, p. 623 f.

³ Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*. Translated by Swain, p. 337.

⁴ Westermarck, *The Origin and Development of the Moral Ideas*, New York, 1912, Vol. II, p. 623.

⁵ King, *The Development of Religion*, New York, 1910, p. 115 f.

THE GOD-EXPERIENCE

his potatoes and other divine edibles. The Fijian gods are described as enormous eaters. The Vedic gods wore clothes, were great drunkards, and suffered from constant hunger."¹

From such conceptions, which have been, in some form, well-nigh universal among more primitive peoples, have been developed more refined beliefs; gods and men becoming table-companions,² eschatology involving a social table in a future life,³ and eating and drinking being elevated into a Christian rite in the Lord's Supper. In all this development God is associated with the satisfaction of the desire for food. The extension of the God-experience and its relation to other desires transfers the appeal of the universal, deep-seated and instinctive impulse to satisfy hunger to the satisfaction of desires for spiritual values.

A feeling of longing or desire, or the contrary feeling of repletion, is common in relation to the God-experience, and some persons discover similarities between these feelings and those of physical hunger and its satisfaction. Thus one person writes:

"Sometimes I have a keen sense of longing, with a feeling of tension or constriction in the region of the stomach, or sometimes more extended through the abdomen. I cannot think the word 'yearning' without some such feelings. A feeling of breathlessness seems to accompany this feeling. At times there is a feeling of satisfaction, in which there is a feeling as though the diaphragm were raised. There is also, with this, a faint sense of warmth throughout the body."

In view of such cases as the above, it is not improbable that the hunger and thirst after righteousness, or after God, involve the organs of strain in the stomach muscles. It is well known, through the studies of various physiologists, that strong emotions affect the peristaltic movements of the stomach and intestines, these movements ceasing, according to Cannon, in the stronger affective states.⁴ Whatever the sense elements which relate the digestive organs to various emotional states, they seem to be specially concerned in the attitudes of yearning or sympathy. That most sensitive people, the Hebrews, distinctly recognized the bowels as the seat of sympathetic attitudes toward one's fellow men, and pictured God's relation

*Inner
Strains
Involved
in Feel-
ings of
Longing*

¹ Westermarck, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 610 f.

² Stratton, *Psychology of the Religious Life*, London, 1911, p. 140.

³ Matthew 8: 11.

⁴ Cannon, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

HUNGER AND THIRST EXPERIENCES

toward men in terms of a similar sympathy.¹ The twenty-fifth Psalm calls upon Jehovah to remember his "bowels and loving-kindnesses," while the song of Zacharias ascribes the birth of John the Baptist to the "bowels of the mercy of our God." And Paul exhorts the Christians of Colosse to "put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies."²

Most of those who report a feeling of hunger or emptiness also experience feelings of constriction or depression; while those in whom a feeling of satisfaction is more prominent in the God-experience seem to have a sense of buoyancy or expansion. In several cases both types of experience are found, depending upon the mood or attitude in general. I am inclined to think that most people feel both these tendencies at various times. Among my papers I find the following:

"I sometimes have a feeling akin to hunger when for any length of time I have not found leisure to meditate on things divine. Contrarily, reflection on these things brings on a feeling of satiety. Sometimes it is a sort of over-satiety, demanding occupation of the mind with things less deep and more related to the ordinary aspects of life."

The feeling of need is surely a common element in the God-experience, and many who do not analyze this feeling confess its prominence in their consciousness. If it be true that this feeling is partly based upon abdominal sensations, these sensations, or their imaginal correlates, if we can distinguish here between sensation and image, are of great significance. One young woman describes such a feeling of need, and then adds: "Some of the truest and best things of life we only know through the feeling;" an observation which embodies a profound truth.

There is occasionally found in the literature of the God-experience a description of a sensation like that of nausea, and there may be elements of imagery in terms of this peculiarly unpleasant experience in cases where there is an acute sense of sin, contrasted with a feeling of God's purity. Thus Augustine "stood aghast" when God showed him how foul he was, "how crooked and defiled, bespotted and ulcerous."³ Swedenborg, with his abnormal olfactory sense, describes certain spirits which he saw in his visions

*Nausea-
tion as
Affect-
ing the
God-
Experi-
ence*

¹ Psalms 25: 6; Luke 1: 78; Philippians 2: 1. See also *Standard Bible Dictionary*, p. 513.

² Colossians 3: 12.

³ Mudge, James, *Honey from Many Hives*, New York, 1899, p. 274.

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as known by "a certain fetid smell, exciting nausea in others when perceived." An undergraduate student describes a "sickening feeling" which accompanies his doubts of the existence of God, and there may be something of this feeling behind the words ascribed to God in his attitude toward the Laodiceans, in the Revelation: "Because thou art neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth."

IX

Kinesthetic Sense Experiences

THE vast variety of sensations originating in the deep tissues of the body demand further study before any psycho-physical basis for such variety can be determined. In fact, so infinite are the possibilities of combination and co-operation of intimate sense stimulations that any qualitative classification is unsatisfactory. In discussing motor strains involved in the God-experience we can only present introspective descriptions, grouping together those experiences which seem to have some element in common. No doubt a thought of God as active, as moving, involves a variety of sense organs acting together, and it is possible that no practicable classification would be adequate to all the varieties and possibilities of sensation involved. The feelings of our own actual or potential activity or that of God may involve a very complicated co-operation of the sense mechanisms of the various visceral organs, beside muscles, tendons, and joints, and indeed may affect the delicate tensions of every part of the body. In this chapter are considered those cases in which God is imaged as moving, or we as acting with relation to him.

*Motor
Strains*

In reply to a questionnaire, 170 college undergraduates answered the question, "What mental picture comes before your mind as you think of God?" Although the question suggested visual imagery, there were very clear motor elements in 53 cases, while, as has been previously indicated, the visual elements seemed to be held in comparatively low esteem.

A large proportion of the more advanced students give evidence of a decided motor imagery of God or motor attitudes toward God. There are many cases of what is called "a sense of power," or "awareness of a higher power," or "a feeling of God's strength." "Great power" and "exact precision" constitute part of the God image of one scientist. One student says: "He is like the amount of energy in the world; remains constant." A young woman describes a vague image of God as conditioned by the thought of his power. Another refers to her "awareness or feeling of a higher power behind this universe and the pulsating, vibrating life of the universe." One man feels that there is an infinite power in whose

*Motor
Experi-
ences
Com-
mon*

THE GOD-EXPERIENCE

grip he would be helpless. Just what inner tensions accompany these experiences cannot be said. They differ very widely with individuals. But it may be doubted if imagery of this sort is ever unaccompanied by some sort of actual sensation of strain.

There are some who think of God as moving. Reference has been made to one who felt that God "might easily glide up and up." Others think of him as "slowly moving about from place to place," or "floating above the earth." One woman says: "I think of God as a spirit *moving*, though sometimes I think of him as everywhere and not needing to move." Another has the following experience, connected with a visual image of "a very thin cloud like a cloud of steam:"

"I often have a very strong feeling of being led. God seems to descend from some point from which he had been looking over my pathway as it lies ahead. He comes nearer, a little ahead of me, and calmly moves on, expecting me to follow."

Motor Imagery Replacing Visual In many cases the visual element has almost disappeared, while the image of power or activity remains. This quite general attitude is represented by the case of one student who describes a visual image but says that it is becoming more forced, adding that he can now image God "only in activity," by which he probably means that only imagery of the latter type is spontaneous. The visual imagery which is common to childhood appears in many such cases less persistent than that involving more directly the organic and strain senses. Various experiments showing how a thought of motion or direction is accompanied by bodily movements or tendencies to movement, as, for example, the familiar experiments with the Ouija board, the Planchette, and the automatograph, indicate that the foregoing examples of an imagery of movement are probably correlated with actual sensations in the strain organs of the body, while their stability indicates that there are also imaginal elements.

Various Inner Strains In many cases there are appreciable motor strains within the body beside the feelings of movement externally referred. Reference was made in the chapter on visual experiences to a graduate student whose imagery of God is "a feeling of movement outward . . . accompanied by a feeling of tension or effort associated with the movement." Another person, whose imagery has also a vague visual content, says: "I think of God as a force that is flowing from the back to forward, similar to an ever-flowing stream of a blue-gray something." This person also has a feeling of shar-

KINESTHETIC SENSE EXPERIENCES

ing some of the strength of this moving God. A feeling of being drawn or attracted toward God seems to be rather common. One person does not "think of God as a moving being, but one filling everything and present everywhere," but has, nevertheless, "a feeling of his great power, an attraction toward him." This attraction, as we might expect, is usually upward. One man who has a clear visual image, which is definitely localized, "north-west of me, about forty feet away, and almost forty-five degrees upward," describes a feeling of "strain under chin and throat,—probably stretch of these parts due to the idea of looking upward for God."

It may be impossible to analyze the feelings of inner opposing strains, as though between struggling forces, which mark certain phases of the God-experience for many people, but they seem to be common, and not confined to any land or time. The feelings of inner strife preceding conversion have been many times described, Chapter V of Starbuck's *Psychology of Religion*, and Lecture VIII of James' *Varieties of Religious Experience*, being the most thorough studies. James emphasizes "a certain discordancy or heterogeneity in the temperament of the subject" for conversion, while Starbuck emphasizes the struggle between the motives toward conversion and the opposing sense of estrangement and tendency to resist conviction. Instances given in these works show the presence of inner feelings of twist and tension. The following extreme quotation is from one of Professor Starbuck's cases:

*Inner
Oppos-
ing Ten-
sions*

"Every time I would call on God, something like a man's hand would strangle me by choking. I don't know whether there were anyone around or near me or not. I thought I should surely die if I did not get help, but just as often as I would pray, that unseen hand was felt on my throat and my breath squeezed off. Finally someone said: 'Venture on the atonement, for you will die anyway if you don't.' So I made one final struggle to call on God for mercy, with the same choking and strangling."¹

The objectification of a hand in this case is unusual, but the sense of struggle appears again and again in experiences preceding conversion. C. G. Finney thus describes his experience:

"I then reproached myself for having promised to give my heart to God before I left the woods. When I came to try I found I could not. . . . My inward soul hung back, and there was no going out of my

¹ James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, New York, 1916, p. 250.

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heart to God. The thought was pressing me, of the rashness of my promise that I would give my heart to God that day or die in the attempt. It seemed to me as if that was binding on my soul; and yet I was going to break my vow."¹

Feelings of opposing inner tensions are not confined to the pre-conversion crisis. Francis of Sales showed an understanding of human nature, if not of mental structure, when he wrote:

"There are two parts in the soul, the inferior and the superior. . . . It frequently happens that the inferior part takes delight in the temptation without the consent, nay, against the will of the superior."²

A very large proportion of college undergraduates report occasional struggles with doubts of various kinds, as well as opposing motives concerning moral or religious acts. These experiences seem to involve some sort of inner pulls which are involved in a duality or plurality of psychic centers or interests. Paul expressed this feeling of inner strife by saying: "What I would that I do not, but what I hate that I do," and by picturing the flesh as "warring against the spirit."³ Augustine pictures this inner warfare as follows:

"The new will which I began to have was not yet strong enough to overcome that other will, strengthened by long indulgence. So these two wills, one old, one new, one carnal, the other spiritual, contended with each other and disturbed my soul."

Whatever be the inner sensations of strain which condition such feelings of strife, the experience has been of great significance in religious thinking. All sorts of objectifications of inner opposing impulses have been made. The Persian dualism, with its Ormuzd and Ahriman, and the Hebrew conception of a Satan opposed to Jehovah, have their deep roots in the same inner feeling of being pulled in different ways. A naïve illustration of the inner warfares which have given rise to the conceptions of contending gods is the following from the Vedic Hymns. It is a portion of a prayer to the Storm-gods, and refers to the warfare between these divinities and Indra:

"I am afraid of this powerful one, and trembling in fear of Indra. For you the offerings were prepared, —we have now put them away, forgive us."⁴

¹ James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, New York, 1916, p. 207.

² Mudge, James, *op. cit.*, p. 96.

³ Romans 7: 15.

⁴ Mueller, *op. cit.*, p. 286.

KINESTHETIC SENSE EXPERIENCES

Psychologically, evil is not a negative thing, but a positive force, struggling for the field of consciousness and conduct. If there is any good in evil, it consists in the heightening of moral energy and the sense of life through strain and struggle. Under emotion there are distinct adjustments and intensifications of nervous energy. Adrenin, for example, is set free to stimulate the heart and tone up the whole active system. Thus there may be a real utility in pain and in the inner strains which condition many of the dissatisfactions of life.

*Value of
Oppos-
ing
Strains*

The presence of opposed tensions does not necessarily imply an unhealthy or unstable state of inner division. In many normal experiences I seem to find a state of balanced tensions, a stable equilibrium of active strains, for which I can think of no better name than "motor poise." Again and again the Hebrew writers call Jehovah a rock, a fortress, or a place of refuge, with an apparent feeling of security, as though something solid were under their feet. Perhaps this imagery has special significance for the author, because it seems a decidedly characteristic element in his own experience. This sense of protectedness differs from a feeling of relaxation after tension. It is more than rest. It is not a feeling of being on a downy bed, but of having something solid, fixed, dependable, beneath one's feet. Many people seem to have this or a similar experience. To some the mountains "round about Jerusalem" represent the experience better than Jehovah as a rock or fortress; others may humanize it by feeling beneath them the "everlasting arms." One student describes it as "a strange feeling of safety and security." Rutherford universalizes it by saying: "My faith hath no bed to sleep upon but Omnipotency." It appears to me a matter of balanced strains, as one of our hymns expresses it, being "fixed on this blissful center," the comfortable feeling of being protected, even "in the presence of mine enemies."

*Motor
Poise*

Labor and drudging exertion being the common lot of the greater mass of people throughout history, it is not strange that the ideal good appears to many as involving rest. "Come unto me and I will give you rest," contains a deep and potent appeal. Some of the college students from whom I have papers feel "a sense of release from care and tension in thinking of God." In some cases there seems to be a fairly constant "feeling of peace." In others there is the relaxation that succeeds tension. One person describes this experience as "a feeling of relaxation and relief after prayer, as though a burden had been taken from me." Another describes it somewhat differently:

*Experi-
ences of
Relaxa-
tion*

THE GOD-EXPERIENCE

“After the first moment of buoyancy in any great experience there comes to me a feeling of relaxation, a feeling that I can feed on that experience for a time. After a time that feeling becomes monotonous and new experiences must be sought.”

The feeling of relaxation is not necessarily a feeling of lassitude; neither is it a merely negative state. It is essentially a reaction from more active tensions. One student, after a description of a visual image of God, adds: “This is accompanied by a feeling of calm, restful hope, and tends to a pleasant stimulation throughout the body.” But in our most intense experiences relaxation disappears. Even the “pleasant stimulation” mentioned above is lost in the more decided tensions which relate themselves to the more active mental attitudes. A graduate student testifies: “In moments of emotional yearning for God, my body feels tense; never relaxed.” The soul’s valuation of rest may be clearly seen in an examination of the Hebrew and Christian songs, with their invitation to “rest in Jehovah,” to rest our weary souls on him, that he may

“Take from our souls the strain and stress,
And let our ordered lives confess
The beauty of his peace.”

Conspicuous among the various attitudes conditioning the God-experience are two which seem to be, in general, mutually exclusive. One is marked by feelings of inner expansion and buoyancy; the other involves a sense of constriction and depression. I find many people in whom the first mentioned attitude is prominent, a much smaller number with the second attitude dominant, and a considerable number who experience decided shifts from one to the other, at different times. To be sure, there is no hard and fast line between these two general attitudes, but they seem to represent a fairly constant distinction.

*Inner
Expansion,
Buoyancy,
Constriction
and Depression*

Among those who have a relatively constant feeling of expansion there are many in whose more objective imagery greatness or vastness is conspicuous. Descriptions of visual imagery frequently refer to “a vast space,” “illimitable space,” something “infinitely greater than anything of which I can possibly form a mental picture,” or “something of immense greatness.” One university professor has no other visual image than “expansiveness.” Another has a vague image of a giant man, the origin of which he refers to his childhood. This image of an enormous man, a very frequent element in the childhood experience, is commonly

KINESTHETIC SENSE EXPERIENCES

greatly modified in later years. One student who in childhood "thought of God as a big man in the far-off heavens," now pictures him as a man of ordinary size; while another has reversed this process and finds his visual image of God grown larger. A third, who remembers a childhood image as of an ordinary man, now describes a vague feeling, "a sense of trying to imagine something that is too great to be imagined by finite mind." The development of the God-experience by the growth of the child's world-view is well illustrated by the following from a student's paper:

*Feelings
of Ex-
pansion
as Re-
lated to
Visual
Experi-
ences*

"My conception of God has naturally broadened as I grew older. When a child, I could not conceive of the entire world, and all I could understand was the relation between God and the people around me. As I grew older and my education spread over the world, I realized that the whole earth was under his guidance. Then later, when I began to realize that the starry sky was not a covering over the earth, but a view out into space, where millions of other planets, most of them even greater than our great earth, revolved and rotated according to certain fixed laws, my view of God grew correspondingly. Then, as I learned the intricacy and complexity of things and the great super-human powers which are in existence, my conception broadened in another direction."

With general consistence these pictures of vastness are accompanied by inner feelings of expansion and buoyancy. A university professor writes: "The thought of God seems to enlarge me, mentally and physically." He has also "a feeling of buoyancy, as though upheld by some soul-satisfying, completing power." Another person thus describes a similar experience: "My God is greater than I, and I feel an inner expansion to measure up to what he is. There is a desire to be like God." An experience which seems to be very common is represented by the following:

*Expan-
sion and
Buoy-
ancy*

"In God I see nature: the skies, the stars, the earth, streams, and vast spaces above. He is all about us, in everything, but seems to be always just a bit above, never touching or coming in contact with anything. I have this feeling when alone at night, puzzling over the great riddle of the stars and the misty, phantom-like lights of the heavens. Then I have a feeling of being slightly upheld, in close proximity to the unintelligible things. At times like this I breathe deeply, throw my chest out and stand straight, my attention centered on no one thing. Then I am satisfied, for is not God the God of the

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earth and the great spaces, and am I not, in a very, very minute way, associated with these?"

There is sometimes, however, a complication in an experience similar to the above. Thus one man describes "an uplifting sensation as though I were being lifted up toward a higher level or plane," and a feeling of expansion, "as though coming into a large place," but continues: "I think I am a little inclined to feel afraid, so the hugeness and vagueness of the object seems to puzzle and humble me." It is evident, from this and similar instances, that one may have a feeling of inner shrinking as well as of inner expansion in relation to the greatness of God. A university professor expresses his feelings as similar to "those of a *small* interested boy in the presence of a *very great man*"; and these feelings may include a sense of the boy's smallness as well as a sense of the man's greatness. Another person thus describes the sense of God's greatness: "In some emotional experiences I have felt a feeling of lightness; at other times it has been something of a downward pressure, but more like a pressure from without, a feeling of being bathed or surrounded by God as water surrounds one."

I find a few cases of persons reacting constantly and consistently with feelings of constriction and depression. One of these writes as follows:

**Con-
striction
and De-
pression**

"I fear God because of the stableness, universality, unchangeableness of law, which makes me feel that every act, impulse, etc., results in one certain thing, and there is no way to dodge it. If one willfully or unwillfully breaks a law, he will have to suffer the consequence, and if the penalty isn't immediate, it will come in the long run. . . . I sometimes feel a depression as I feel there is no mercy in God and no salvation except that which one builds for himself. . . . After I left the church I was in a state of complete chaos, and perhaps more because I felt I had to have something to lean on than (because of) the feeling that light once again shone."

Another student, whose experience appears to be undergoing less of storm and stress, if we may judge from the general tone of the report, says:

"Sometimes I have a feeling of hunger or of littleness rather than of satisfaction or fullness. . . . In thinking of God I have a feeling of depression and of constriction and sometimes of fear and awe."

KINESTHETIC SENSE EXPERIENCES

Many people have very decided feelings of expansion and buoyancy at times, and just as decided feelings of constriction and depression at other times and under other circumstances. These different attitudes sometimes involve just as different views of God. In the attitude of expansion and buoyancy God is described as great and powerful, but kindly, fatherly, often near the worshiper. The other attitude seems to put God at a distance, and to make him stern and relatively unfriendly. I can best illustrate this by quotations from three clergymen:

*These
Feelings
in Rela-
tion to
Moods
and At-
titudes*

"It happens that during extemporaneous prayer I have a feeling of expansion, as if my body would follow the mind in its effort to come in touch with the life of God, so far transcending the limits of human experience. But such feelings cannot always be conjured up. Often one has a feeling of restriction, and there is no flow of thought . . . With me the feeling of buoyancy is more frequent than that of depression. Nor is the latter kind so enduring with me as the former."

"When I think God in an active way, there comes inevitably a feeling of buoyancy. I feel at home in the world and want to run and leap and play. . . . When I am in a mood of depression and feel my unworthiness I begin to criticize myself definitely. Then the resolve comes to do some specific thing to better conditions. With the first act confidence is restored in myself and I become conscious of a self that can achieve. Then God is at the time the end of the whole line of achievements and the immediate inspirer of my actions."

"Sometimes I feel buoyant, and sometimes, after I have thought too long or spent too much time in religious matters I have a feeling of depression. Once in awhile the Old Testament conception comes surging up within me, and the awful majesty and power and wrath of God seem to be his outstanding characteristics, and then I feel as David: 'Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me?' . . . When I consider the littleness of my own life in comparison with the universal God-life, this gives a feeling of constriction; but when I think of my life merging, or flowing over, into the life of God, 'as the dewdrop slips into the shining sea,' this gives a feeling of expansion,—a feeling that I, too, may be great and universal, and be the embodiment of the big God-life. . . . Sometimes when I am in 'low spirits,' prayer or thought of God causes the heart to beat a little faster and with a new power I feel lighter within, and more buoyant."

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Most of those who have reported the alternating experiences described above seem to have blended them together into a consistent relation, or attempted to do so. To many of them prayer is a remedy for the feeling of depression, as in the last case quoted above, or they experience a feeling of "lightness and ease" after prayer has relieved this sense of depression and inner constriction. But one paper describes two divergent views of God, which seem to involve two very different complexes:

"We know we live in a vast universe, how vast we can scarcely dream, but the power which moves it all according to law is so infinitely greater, how can we conceive of it? . . . We say at times 'God is good,' when everything for us goes smoothly; and at other times, 'As flies to the wanton boys are we to the gods; they kill us for their sport.'"

It seems probable that here are two moods involving very different complexes of the tensions described in this chapter. In general, however, in the cases which I have studied, the God-experience seems to involve feelings of buoyancy and expansion in greater degree than those of depression and constriction.

X

Experiences Involving Kinesthetic and Organic Fusion

THERE are times in the lives of many when the God-experience is marked by feelings of a nervous thrill throughout the body, or by a condition approaching ecstasy. These feelings are not confined, however, to experiences while definitely thinking of God. They may come under various circumstances, as an element in our appreciation of the wonders of nature, the beauties of art, human love, devotion or heroism,—any of the higher appreciations which mark the more exalted experiences of men.

Bodily Thrills and Ecstatic Feelings

Nervous thrill, perhaps consisting of rapid and rhythmical sense processes throughout the body or large parts of it, is a common element in relatively intense experiences of emotion, in the God-experience. Various students describe "a stimulation within my veins," or some such feeling of thrill throughout the body. One describes a thrill "as though music were rushing through my veins." There is perhaps a certain sense-affinity between the thrill of religious enthusiasm and that of intoxication, and this may give point to the exhortation of Paul: "Be not drunk with wine, but be filled with the spirit." Among some peoples such a relation between the emotional aspect of the God-life and the nervous tingling of alcoholic stimulation has been clearly recognized. Union with God has been represented by this characteristic thrill, relief from inhibitions, irresponsibility, or a feeling of being affected by a force outside one's self, all of which are found in intoxication. A remarkable instance of what has been called "the devout Bacchanalia" of the Persians is the song from which the following is quoted:

"Know'st thou who the Host may be who pours the spirit's wine?
Know'st thou what the liquor is whose taste is so divine?
The Host is thy Beloved One—the wine annihilation,
And in the fiery draught thy soul drinks in illumination."¹

¹ Vaughan, *Hours With the Mystics*, 5th ed., London, 1888, Vol. II, p. 24f.

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**Signifi-
cance of
Intoxi-
cation** In the Vedic Hymns there are frequent references to *soma*, of which the gods as well as men are supposed to partake. Some of the medieval mystics describe the God-experience very vividly in terms of intoxication. Thus Saint Francis is described as being "drunken with the love and compassion of Christ," and says:

"The high grace of contemplation is . . . a sweet emanation of the Holy Ghost, and a rapture and an exaltation of the mind, which is inebriated in the contemplation of that ineffable savour of divine sweetness."¹

Here, probably, is an experience which has actually been affected by sense-elements suggested by this rich mixture of organic reactions. Saint Bernardino of Siena frequently employed the imagery of intoxication in his sermons. In addressing a congregation of women, he exclaimed:

"O, women, would that I might behold you all, and myself along with you, intoxicated with the wine of the glory of life eternal."²

Again in a sermon on the text: "*Si quis sitit, veniat ad me et bibat*," he said:

"The sinner Magdalen had doubtless heard her call in the temple, wherefore, as a thirsty sheep, she hurried to the fountain of love, where she drank and drank to intoxication. . . . *Bibite et inebriamini, carissimi*, in the words of the canticle, since Jesus Christ is addressing you all."³

It is clear that this is figurative language, but it seems probable, at least possible, that certain resemblances between the states of alcoholic stimulation and "God-intoxication" may have dictated this particular type of figures. The value of the experiences of those to whom intoxication makes such an appeal may be doubted, but that the God-experience sometimes involves feelings of inner thrill is certain. Among some of the American Indians the use of "*peyote*," an intoxicating drug, is given a religious significance, and its effects are valued as being actual religious experiences.

**Ecstasy
and the
Senses** Ecstatic states, in which one seems to be carried beyond the bounds of sense, in which the mind is strangely open to what seem inspired truths, experiences which seem ineffable and indescribable, have come to many people as distinct God-experiences. Similar experiences have been induced by beautiful music, magnificent

¹ *The Little Flowers of Saint Francis*, Everyman's Library, pp. 174 and 267.

² Thureau-Dangin, *op. cit.*, p. 195.

³ Thureau-Dangin, *op. cit.*, p. 157.

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scenery, great works of art, or other things which awaken deep appreciation. There are appreciable stages in such experiences, perhaps first the very keen sense-feelings appropriate to the reaction; then a dropping off of conscious sense processes, first those which most clearly objectify the world, and then, more gradually, the intimate sense experiences, until there is only a confused blend of inner feelings, perhaps with a feeling of bodily lightness, so that one seems to be lifted up; then a drifting off into actual unconsciousness; and at last the gradual return to the realm of sense. Because particularly of the delightful blending of intimate sense elements, probably, the ecstatic state has been highly valued and believed to be a medium of divine illumination.

Evelyn Underhill thus describes what she terms the state of "Quiet":

"To one who is entering into this state of orison, the external world seems to get further and further away: till at last nothing but the paramount fact of his own existence remains. So startling, very often, is the deprivation of all his accustomed mental furniture, of the noise and flashing of the transmitting instruments of sense, that the negative aspect of his state dominates consciousness: and he can but describe it as a nothingness, an emptiness, a 'naked' orison. He is there, as it were, poised, resting, waiting, he does not know for what; only he is conscious that all, even in this utter emptiness, is well. Presently, however, he becomes aware that *Something* fills this emptiness; something omnipresent, intangible, like sunny air."¹

The difficulty of describing these states is illustrated by the fact that another writer denies even the feeling of one's own existence:

"In all the stages of religious ecstasy, æsthetic pleasure, and creative inspiration, is to be traced what we know as the loss of the feeling of self. . . . It is the *feeling* of personality that has faded."²

Since ancient times states of ecstasy have been common elements in the God-experience. Paul describes being "caught up to the third heaven," where he heard "unspeakable things." The mystics describe these states, which they value highly, in many ways. They involve the stilling of the bodily senses,³ being "lost and

¹ Underhill, *op. cit.*, p. 379f.

² Puffer, *The Psychology of Beauty*, Boston, 1905, p. 60.

³ Suso, in Connell, *op. cit.*, p. 88.

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absorbed into the being or existence of the universe,"¹ entering a still, mysterious, desolate wilderness where there is nothing but God,—“the Quiet Desert of the Godhead,”² losing “in the love of thee, all perception of myself,”³ allowing the will to be “so absorbed in the divine will that it cannot be distinguished from it,”⁴ “floating in a clear atmosphere, almost untrammelled by earthly limitations,”⁵ getting up and beyond one’s self and mounting up to God,⁶ keeping their bodies motionless, lest “at the least movement they will lose this sweet peace.”⁷

Experiences of this sort are not uncommon, especially with relation to music. Various persons describe this effect of music upon them. They are lifted out of their surroundings into another realm, do not hear those who speak to them, have “a feeling of balance,” feel that the music fulfils every desire. Music seems to bring to one young woman a similar inner illumination to that of the religious mystics. “I sometimes feel as though I suddenly understood the whole universe.” Similar experiences have been occasioned by seeing a great work of art, or have come when standing on a mountain slope overlooking a magnificent landscape. One man describes an experience under the influence of Wordsworth’s *Excursion*:

“As I was reading the book I suddenly felt at peace with everything. It didn’t matter whether I lived or died. But I didn’t recognize this experience as religious.”

In their essential aspects these ecstatic experiences, music-induced and otherwise, seem to be at one with those distinctly involving the God-relation. There appears to be a relative subsidence of the more clearly objectifying sense experiences, a pleasant blending of intimate sense elements, feelings of satisfaction and sometimes of buoyancy or bodily lightness, tending toward, or merging into, unconsciousness.

The ecstatic experiences described above, while characteristic, are but a few out of many types and degrees. The extreme experiences of trances and catalepsies are evidently not conducive to mental or physical health. But occasional experiences approaching the ecstatic are a normal element in the life of appreciation. Even in a mild degree, a constant state of ecstatic elevation would be unwholesome, or impossible. But the index of normality is not

¹ Underhill, *op. cit.*, p. 232.

² *Ib.*, 364.

³ Mudge, James, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

⁴ *Ib.*, p. 111.

⁵ James, Grace, *op. cit.*, p. 95.

⁶ Underhill, *op. cit.*, p. 364.

⁷ *Ib.*, p. 383.

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dead-levelness of experience, and a high moment of appreciation may be of value to the practical adjustments of life.

The types of intimate sense complexes above studied do not constitute a comprehensive list. Such a list would include complexes involving the sex feelings and the organs of reproduction, and many others. But those treated are representative in that they illustrate the important place of such complexes in the God-experience. The following chapters will consist of more general discussions of the place of these sense and feeling elements in the God-experience.

Feeling and Sensation

*Feeling
as Fun-
damental in Ex-
perience*

To SAY that the God-experience is predominantly feelingful is not to depreciate the experience, but rather to recognize the high importance of the feelings. Our highest values are found in and through the affective phases of consciousness. Psychology has been slow to recognize this. We have centered our systems in the cognitive aspects of mind, and have consequently exalted those sense processes which mediate most definitely between us and the outside world. To be sure, one reason for this is the relative ease of experimenting upon the more objective senses. They seem distinct, disparate, analyzable. We can hold them in attention as we cannot hold any other phenomena of consciousness. But these objective senses and the cognitive processes which we have thought to derive from them do not exist for themselves alone. They serve in the interest of the life of appreciation and evaluation. They minister to the inner feelings, and through them stimulate us to active volitional responsiveness. A sensation without this inner connection with the affective life would stand in meaningless isolation; while any mental process based entirely upon such isolated sensations (were such a condition possible), would be without human significance or interest. It is our feelings, involving the more deep-seated intimate reactions, which condition all our attitudes, appreciations, recognitions, and evaluations. The highest human values, ethical, æsthetic, and religious, are thus most fundamentally involved in these often undervalued elements of sense and feeling.

Concerning the psycho-physical basis of the feelings there has been much controversy, out of which have appeared several points of quite general agreement, although there is need for much more investigation. The feelings are conditioned by characteristic reactions of the vital organs of the body. Professor Calkins considers the following distinctions "more or less probable:

"(1) Pleasantness is characterized by a slow and strong pulse, by dilating arteries, and by bodily warmth. Unpleasantness is characterized by a fast, weak pulse and by bodily chill. This is the result best established by experiment and by introspection.

FEELING AND SENSATION

“(2) Pleasantness is perhaps characterized by relatively quick and weak breathing; unpleasantness by slow and deep breathing. This conclusion is not so well substantiated.”

While pleasantness and unpleasantness do not constitute a satisfactory classification of feeling states, the quotation illustrates the general agreement that there is a close relation between such physiological phenomena as are mentioned and states of feeling. Such processes as the above are the more commonly observed accompaniments of feeling, but there are many others which may be discovered both by introspection and by experimental methods.

It seems to be generally agreed, also, that the above organic processes, with many others involved in the various visceral organs, are accompanied by characteristic sensations, difficult to analyze but definitely related to consciousness, and hence inextricably involved in our various feeling states. Even those who insist upon an elemental feeling process, co-ordinate with sensation, agree that the process “is akin to sensation and is derived from the same source, made (so to speak) out of the same kind of primitive mental material.”¹ This being true, why is the assumption of an extra-sensational element necessary? If sensation and feeling are of one origin, and if it is true that every sensation involves a complex, with a certain feeling tone, it is probable that our distinctions are between variously formed complexes rather than between elementally different experiences. If we are to insist upon absolutely elemental experiences, it may be well to search underneath even sensation for something still more fundamental. Professor Muensterberg, with this possibility in mind, writes:

“Are these sensations the ultimate elements of the contents of our consciousness, or is that which we call a blue or hot sensation, a sweet taste, a tone C, a muscle sensation, or a pain sensation itself a complex affair which consists of more elementary parts: in short, have we in mind ultimate elements which are simpler than the sensations?”²

The intimate senses have proved difficult of study because of the vague localization of their functions by introspection, and the lack of such definitely observable end organs as are related to other senses. What we have chiefly observed has been the bodily tone involved in a mingling of sensations, called by various names, such as cœnesthesia or common feeling.

The Relation of Feeling to Sensation

The Intimate Senses

¹ Titchener, *A Text Book of Psychology*, New York, 1912, p. 226.

² Muensterberg, *Psychological Atomism*, *Psychological Review*, Vol. VII, p. 4.

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“Certain mixtures of vaguely localized sensations, with feelings of a more or less pleasant or unpleasant tone, have acquired the name of *sensus communis*, of ‘common feeling.’ Such feeling may have more or less of content of one kind or another, according to the state of perception and ideation with which it is combined. Nervous impulses of indefinite variety and the most manifold peripheral origin are constantly pouring in, as it were, upon the cerebral centers—each one contributing some element to the characteristic tone of consciousness. The resulting feelings are *modes of our being affected* which are not converted into definite presentations of sense, or referred to a particular part of our own bodies. The effect of changes in the minute blood-vessels and other capillaries about the nerve-endings, the presence of impurities in the blood, the condition of the lower cerebral centers, the action of the heart and lungs and other internal organs, and the connection of the sympathetic with the cerebro-spinal nervous system, are all felt in this way. Moreover, inasmuch as few (if any) sensations are without some tone of feeling, while many sensations are exceedingly heterogeneous in their elements, and not clearly referred to the place of their origin, a *mélange*, as it were, of obscure bodily affections is readily formed.”¹

Such a *mélange* is not an unusual accompaniment of a sensory experience, but rather the normal content of every sense experience, in which obscure and perhaps disregarded elements so modify the more conspicuous sensations as to determine their feeling-tone and indeed their meaning and value. It should be remarked, however, that these usually unnoticed elements are not necessarily altogether vague. Were not some of them observable at times Professor Ladd’s paragraph would be a pure and unsupported hypothesis. In certain feeling states, especially in strong emotion, organic and kinesthetic sensations make themselves felt. Reactions of the heart, lungs, stomach, and other visceral organs become distinct in consciousness. We can localize them and observe, with relative clearness, their place in the total affective complex.

The fact that no special sense organs have been correlated with the intimate sense-feelings does not argue against their sensory nature. Sense organs are relatively recent acquisitions, and sensation is older than any special organ. And in the developed organism there are definite sensations which are not conditioned by end-organs, but by the direct stimulation of a nerve.² It is held by

¹ Ladd and Woodworth, *Elements of Physiological Psychology*, New York, 1911, p. 518.

² Sherrington, *The Integrative Action of the Nervous System*, New York, 1906, p. 227.

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some writers that the entire organism is in constant movement, in all its parts. There seems to be warrant for believing that this bodily activity constantly and positively conditions our consciousness. Consciousness, thus modified, responds to every situation by some readjustment of its sense-feeling mechanism, according to our experience, instincts, habits, and will. It is not sufficient to say that "all sensations referred to the body itself rather than interpreted as qualities of objects in the external world, tend to be tinged with 'feeling'."¹ The truth is that *all* sensation not only tends to be tinged with feeling, but constantly *is* so affected; and it may be added that through this tinge of feeling, the result of a coordinate intimate sense complex, sensation gains whatever deeper value or significance it may possess for us.

This exaltation of the feelings and intimate senses may be called in question. Are not the cognitive processes the highest development of mind? And is not the mechanism which conditions objective perception, judgment, and reason, the more highly specialized development of the central nervous system? Very true, but this specialization is in the interest of the older and more fundamental elements of consciousness. Nature has developed the more objective senses and the processes of thought and reason as tools to be used in behalf of the higher values, certainly not as ends in themselves. And just as a tool is impotent without a guiding hand, a cognitive process is always exercised through and for some more immediate sense of the value of the knowledge to be attained. The more fundamentally evaluating elements, the feelings and intimate sense processes, are biologically older.² They have experience behind them, not that of the individual, merely, but that of the race. They are close-knit with the mass of instinctive reactions, so closely related that many writers see a constant parallelism between the instincts and those highly organized feeling complexes we call emotions.

Bodily activity is dependent upon the feelings, and these, in turn, upon the intimate senses. The relation of these to the totality of mental life should be clear. Consciousness is not a duality of affection and cognition. These distinguishable phases of the process are always intermingled so that affective elements are as essential to the discovery of truth as are purely intellectual elements. Much of our knowledge comes, as has been indicated, through an immediacy which is conditioned by the intimate senses,

Articulative Senses in the Interest of Feeling and Will

¹ Sherrington, *op. cit.*, p. 226.

² Ribot, *The Psychology of the Emotions*, New York, 1911, p. 438.

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*Image-
less
Thought*

co-operating in feelings of appreciation, recognition and evaluation. And here we have the significance of so-called "imageless thought." There may be thought without articulate imagery, but not without imagery or actual sensation in terms of the intimate senses. In many cases, as Muensterberg has clearly indicated, "the preciseness of the thought and the richness of elements which enter into the process will depend very little upon the full-fledged conscious representations and symbols. A world of experience may be condensed in a thought of which the various stages hardly enter consciousness and in which only bits of memories or of formulated judgments combined with kinesthetic impressions appear."¹ The kinesthetic impressions mentioned, with other intimate sense reactions, constitute a very essential element in such a thought process. In fact, there is always, in cognitive processes, an intensification through such intimate reactions. "Our acting is the chief vehicle to carry material to our mind and to form there associative connections without end,"² and underneath all activity are these affective elements, which are thus potent in all phases of our mental life.

¹ Muensterberg, *op. cit.*, p. 194.

² *Ib.*, p. 130.

The Significance of Intimate Reactions in Evaluation and Appreciation

IT HAS been the hard and rather thankless task of ethics and æsthetics to attempt the discovery of some objective test and basis for values. The difficulty has been in the attitude, the typical intellectual attitude, of externalizing our problem, setting it off and apart from conditioning experiences, letting our values shrink and shrivel as they will in this cold, cognitive climate, and then applying our analytical powers to whatever may remain. The true solution of the problem is in the recognition of the values in their native setting. Evaluation has always a subjective reference, and finds its warrant for being, yes, its very being, in the instinctive reactions of our highly complicated organism.

The Affective Basis of Values

The view of evaluating intuition here considered should not be judged an anti-intellectualistic one, however. There is an intimate relation between intellect and feeling, by which they normally co-operate. Kant recognized this when he "suggested reasonable ground for finding the union of will and reason in feeling."¹ Cognition and affection are not separate entities, but phases or modes of emphasis in consciousness. In fact, feeling is so essential to reason that a recent writer says that "rationality . . . signifies systematic insight,"² Bergson says that "it would be difficult to cite a biological discovery due to pure reasoning,"³ while Baldwin, writing of æsthetic intuition, uses the term "æsthetic reason," which "is really in every case a state of feeling."⁴ Royce, in analyzing what we mean when we say, "Be reasonable," says: "In such uses of the word reason, reason is not opposed to intuition. . . . No, reason, in such cases, means simply broader intuition, the sort of seeing that grasps many views in one, that surveys life as it were from above, that sees, as the wanderer views the larger landscape from a mountain top."⁵ In fact, underneath all effective thinking there is an energizing and unifying impulse flowing out of the affective elements of consciousness.

The Relation of Feeling to Intellect

¹ Baldwin, *Genetic Theory of Reality*, New York, 1915, p. 211.

² Galloway, *The Philosophy of Religion*, New York, 1914, p. 357.

³ Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, trans. by Mitchell, New York, 1913, Intro. p. x.

⁴ Baldwin, *op. cit.*, p. 272.

⁵ Royce, *Sources of Religious Insight*, New York, 1914, p. 85 f.

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"Our knowledge rests on an intuition which is not, at least which is never purely, intellectual. This intuition is of the very essence of life, and the intellect is formed from it by life, or is one of the forms that life has given to it in order to direct the activity and serve the purpose of the living beings that are endowed with it."¹

One who thus sees affection and cognition in co-operation "will not despise instinct, and feeling, and the movings of faith, and the inarticulate intuitions. For he will know that all these things are human, are indispensable, and are the basis upon which the genuine work of the reason, the wider view of life, must be carried toward its fulfilment."²

But although closely related, these phases of consciousness are distinct enough to warrant our comparing them and discussing their fundamental differences. The one makes greater use of the objectifying senses, while the other is chiefly conditioned by the deeply intimate reactions and feelings. The one functions chiefly in logical discrimination and analysis, the other in evaluation and appreciation. "The great motive and the prolonged struggle of the cognitive interest, as such, the interest in neutral and objective truth, is just to disentangle the bare object from the meshes of preferential interest and interpretation, and preserve intact its system of commonly observable relationships."³ But practical life is chiefly concerned with the affective processes, which not only reinforce the cognitive but recognize and evaluate all our experiences.

"On occasion, as an independent issue or as a means to a further end, the datum, the bed-rock of perception, which, as a body of objectively stable and unyielding objects, is the control upon action, comes sharply into its own. Generally, however, it serves only as a condition, a sign, a trigger, a signal for the outpouring of the mass of affective processes and of social habits, which overflow and conceal it."⁴

*Feeling
as Men-
tal Dy-
namic*

Thus the great energy of mind is chiefly affective. The force which responds to the world, lending its energy to cognition, and utilizing cognition for its own ends, is feeling; "the force which carries out any choice is the impulsive action of feeling;"⁵ and the force through which our racial past directs us to the useful and valuable is this same deep-lying intimate stimulation.

¹ Carr, H. Wildon, *Henri Bergson: The Philosophy of Change*, London, 1911, p. 13 f.

² Royce, *op. cit.*, p. 92.

³ Baldwin, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

⁴ *Ib.* p. 16.

⁵ Dewey, *Psychology*, New York, 1891, p. 415.

REACTIONS IN EVALUATION AND APPRECIATION

It is unfortunate if, in our devotion to the analytic and the external, we have undervalued the internal and evaluating processes. Bergson feels that we have in great part sacrificed the greater for the less.

“In the humanity of which we are a part, intuition is, in fact, almost completely sacrificed to intellect. It seems that to conquer matter, and to reconquer its own self, consciousness has had to exhaust the best part of its own power. This conquest, in the particular conditions in which it has been accomplished, has required that consciousness should adapt itself to the habits of matter and concentrate all its attention on them, in fact, determine itself more especially as intellect. Intuition is there, however, but vague and above all discontinuous. It is a lamp almost extinguished, which only glimmers now and then, for a few moments at most. But it glimmers whenever a vital interest is at stake. On our personality, on our liberty, on the place we occupy in the whole of nature, on our origin and perhaps also on our destiny, it throws a light feeble and vacillating, but none the less pierces the darkness of the night in which the intellect leaves us.”¹

I am not sure that intuition is discontinuous. It is doubted and disregarded in many of our life concerns, but, however circumscribed, it is always operative so long as we have a human interest or obey a human instinct. It may be dwarfed and confined, but it cannot wholly die. The tragedy is that we disregard its directing urge and put a weary trust in the dim light of intellect.

It is doubtless true that all our values may be referred to the welfare of the organism, and that they exist in its interest, but for us they are more than the logical correlates of past, present, or future welfare. They exist for themselves alone. They are of immediate worth. “That is true which appeals,” is the pragmatic formulation given by Professor Patrick. “That is valuable which appeals,” may be a fair statement of the position here discussed. But does not this reduce all values to a purely subjective basis, and shut them up within a solipsistic wall? Not while man remains a social being and maintains his instinctive connection with his racial past. There are, to be sure, a vast number of misvaluations and affective cross-currents, and there is surely no warrant for claiming any simple, inerrant, and universally active intuition. But the existence of values is a common fact of consciousness, and

*The
Uni-
versal
Evaluat-
ing
Process*

¹ Bergson, *op. cit.*, p. 267 f.

THE GOD-EXPERIENCE

upon our system of evaluations both our social environment and our racial heredity have been at work, until there have been established relatively stable points of evaluation which are with relative universality recognized. Our recognitions of value are closely related with our recognition of truth. Professor Starbuck says of the application of scientific method to the study of religion:

“We shall have to content ourselves by working around the outskirts, making an inroad here and there, feeling our way where clear paths fail, until we are able to say of the religious sense, as of every other field we try to explore, we understand it, *because there are bits of it which satisfy the demands of our intelligence sufficiently to give the feel of knowledge by producing steadfastness in our emotional attitudes.*”¹

There is much of error and emotional instability involved in our evaluations, to be sure, but it is also certain that we have missed many of the great universal stabilities by our very emphasis upon the unstable elements. We have questioned and analyzed the basis of value until we have lost sight of the many solidly founded superstructures upon it.

The value of the God-experience, as a fact of consciousness, is thus as immediate as my evaluation of my friendly neighbor. While not unreasonable, it is not a reasoned-out process. We have reasoned much about religion,

“but all these intellectual operations, whether they be constructive or comparative and critical, presuppose immediate experiences as their subject matter. They are interpretative and inductive operations, operations after the fact, consequent upon religious feeling, not coordinate with it, not independent of what it ascertains.”²

¹ Starbuck, *The Psychology of Religion*, New York, 1912, p. 10f.

² James, William, *op. cit.*, p. 433.

XIII

The God Who May Be Known

THE quest of the soul is for the true, the abiding, the dependable. In this quest the philosophers of the ages have gone forth seeking, through some limited experience, to cognize reality. But inasmuch as none has been able to completely cognize so much as the growth process of a blade of grass, the total principle underneath all life and being has remained tantalizingly hidden. Nevertheless, men have caught some gleam of the underlying reality, sufficient to stimulate them to speculative wonder, and have built up a variety of theologies which have been dogmatic statements about a cognitively incomprehensible God. To these we have bowed down, often with a true and worthy worship, but with a mistaken notion as to the significance of intellection in the total experience. We have thought that philosophy and science are at their best in the field of pure cognition, whereas philosophy is far more than a love for intellectual equations, and science is far from its best when it is satisfied with mere logical coherences. It is not a denial of God to say that philosophy and science have often dealt, either positively or negatively, with the false gods of human cognitive comprehension.

*The
God-
Experience
as
Knowl-
edge*

But we may *know* God. Much of our knowledge comes not through the mediacy of cognition, but through an immediate appreciation of relatedness. Thus one knows a friend, is immediately conscious of the attitude which distinguishes friendship, without completely cognizing his friend. When I see at a distance a man with a certain characteristic gait, I say it is my friend Robinson. Inasmuch as the gait is characteristic I am justified in my judgment. Other characteristics I cannot see at this distance, and even when we meet face to face I know that what I see is but the outward and least significant element in my friend's nature. The essential thing is that I know him. I may even mistake another man for Robinson, but I can never be convinced that I do not *know* Robinson. When I say we can know God, your mind at once reverts to a conception, to various images, to an intellectual portrait of God. Let me urge you to forget the portrait, as far as is possible. You cannot altogether dismiss it, but you can con-

THE GOD-EXPERIENCE

ceive of it as a shadowy and partial presentment of a vastly greater Reality.

It is the paradoxical truth of religion that the only satisfying conception of God is that he is greater than any intellectual conception of him. Who can picture a God who relates together all the processes of universal nature? We can picture little gods and call them infinite, and there may be value in such conceptions; but the God of experience is beyond picturization. Our satisfaction is in our own religious attitude. We are not truly religious unless we love beauty and truth and goodness for their own sakes, which means also for our own inner experiences, which means also for their relation to their perfection—God.

The subjectivism of the God-experience is not solipsism, for the basis of this experience is vital and social and racial. The sense-feeling complexes which condition it are not merely self-originated. They tell of my ancestors, of their life, their struggles, their solutions of life's problems. I may have invented a theology, but I have inherited my religion. It bears the pragmatic sanction of my ancestry. It comes out of the reality of experience. Without human experience reality would be of another sort than that which we know. What of culture, art, morality, religion? Because we live, these live also. The whole world of beauty, of truth, of morality, awakes at the touch of a human hand. Concerning the back-lying and all-inclusive realities we may speculate; the God of experience we know.

The God of experience is known through the more original and intimate powers of the mind. The intellect is of later development. It has a limited range and application. "It has been formed by a narrowing, a shrinking, a condensation of consciousness."¹ Beyond the limited field of intellect are the broader and deeper and more intimate experiences. "The intellect reveals its origin by the wider sense of consciousness which surrounds it like a penumbra. It is this wider consciousness that enables us to have the direct vision that we have called the intuition of life."² This fringe of consciousness beyond cognition is the immediacy of apparently submerged intimate elements. Through these we have our æsthetic appreciations, our unreasoned recognitions, our active moral stimulations. In a very real sense, also, through this sensitive penumbra of intimate reactions we know God.

¹ Carr, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

² *Ib.*, p. 32.

XIV

Sense Experiences Indicated By the Words of Jesus

OF THE words of the great Teacher we have comparatively few. He wrote no book; we have not even a letter from his pen. There was no scribal disciple to record his daily words of wisdom. All that is left for us is a brief body of quotations, written from recollection after long years. The words in which Jesus recorded his relation toward God are especially fragmentary. Like most fine-spirited men, he preserved a certain reticence in relation to his deeper experiences, referring to them only when the progress of his teaching demanded.

The imagery of the recorded sayings of Jesus is sublimely simple, but full of a wonderfully rich variety of sense elements. It is the simplicity of the highest art, unaffected and honest, which, upon close inspection, proves to be the product of the infinite complexities with which nature always underlays her masterpieces.

In his teaching concerning the kingdom of heaven, Jesus uses visual and auditory imagery freely, but not merely for their own sakes, and never without an adequate background of other imagery. They are symbols through which he touches the organic springs of feeling and appreciation. His emphasis is upon the inner life elements rather than upon externals. He pictures cup and platter, but his chief concern is with their inner purity. He presents no apocalypses, and if he has glowing visions he describes them with a minimum of visual media. The visual element in his parables is not photographic but suggestive. It is the impressionism that is absolutely true to nature; it is the realism that recognizes the dominant reality of the unseen. Life is full and active as we read his words. When Christianity became the accepted faith of the Roman Empire, it triumphed over another faith which seems to have made much of visual symbols. The records of the Iranian Mithra cult, which thus contended with Christianity for supremacy in the early centuries after Christ, show that this Mediator-god was widely symbolized in statues, bas reliefs, coins, and altars. May it not be that one element in the fall of this divinity in Rome was

*Emphasis
upon In-
ternal
Rela-
tions-
hips*

THE GOD-EXPERIENCE

this very appeal to the visual and more superficial, as distinguished from the Christian appeal to the deeper sense experiences, the feelings, and the life of inner appreciation?

Jesus came at a time when many of his religious fellow-countrymen valued the visual and the cognitive and the external and the formal. If he were the Messiah they must have a sign, a visual symbol. Belief had become relatively intellectualized, so that he must prove to their intellects his Messiahship. "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will in no wise believe," he said. "An evil and an adulterous generation seeketh after a sign." Their religion had been worked out formally and intellectually, and had become relatively dissociated from the inner life, character, and conduct, so that he exclaimed: "Woe unto you, ye Pharisees! For ye tithe the mint and rue and every herb, and pass over justice and the love of God." The overvaluation of externals, which affected even the more intimate disciples, Jesus met with the conception of the kingdom of God. But even this was to them an external, though glorious, throne erection, in which they might hope for places of honor. To correct this false impression, Jesus said:

"The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, Lo, here! or There! for lo, the kingdom of God is within you."

This appreciation of the reality and high value of the internal is found throughout the records of the life and words of Jesus. He saw life from many angles, combining in himself most harmoniously all sorts of strains and inclinations, but through it all, life was never superficial. His chief interests were in the deep realities of human character.

The God-experience of Jesus may be learned indirectly through his parables, his aphorisms, his conversations, and the fragments of his talks to his disciples which we possess, and also through the records of his attitudes and deeds; but we have a limited number of passages in which he confesses his own inner attitudes with relation to God. Aside from the long prayer in John 17, and omitting indirect references and duplications from different gospels, this direct testimony of Jesus to his own experience is comprised in sixty verses. In fifty of these the word "Father" is used. In four cases the word "God" is used; in three, "he that sent me"; while the terms "God the Father," "Power," and "The Holy Spirit," are each used once. In each case in which the word God is used there seems to be a feeling of God as set off in contrast. In one case,

The Attitude of Jesus Toward God

SENSE EXPERIENCES

when Jesus protested against being called Good Master, his mind being filled with the contrast between himself and God, he said: "Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is God." At another time a similar feeling of contrast led to his saying: "I came forth and am come from God." Even in saying that "God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten son," there is a feeling of God's greatness in relation to the whole world, which differs from the usual feeling of filial intimacy. And this feeling of separation deepens in the mortal struggles of Calvary to a positive though brief feeling of alienation, and he cries out: "My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" In one case Jesus uses the term "God the Father" in describing his relationship to God in formal or legal terms, saying of "the Son of man," "Him hath God the Father sealed." In all these cases there appears to be a feeling of God as relatively distant, greater than Jesus himself, or otherwise separated from him.

Whatever sense experience is included in the more usual attitude as of a son toward a father is of the deepest and most intimate sort. The theology, the sociology, the psychology of Jesus, if he may be said to have had any of these things, are implied in this common, life-born relationship. But we are interested here in the sense elements in this experience. There seems to be little of the visual, if any, in Jesus' imagery of God. If the face of Joseph affects the concept of fatherhood, just as truly and much more significantly do the bodily reactions, inner strains, organic phenomena, involved in the inner attitude of the boy Jesus toward the carpenter of Nazareth. Fatherhood is, to Jesus, the deep interest of one who "gives good gifts to his children." Perhaps there is something in common between this warm personal attitude and that indicated in the confession of a student, to whom I have previously referred, who cannot think of God as a divinity to be worshipped and maintain a feeling of relation toward him. To Jesus, God is near, tender, and concerned in his welfare. Whatever intimate sense reactions are involved in the attitudes of personal affection are here. "The Father loveth the Son," and the constant attitude of the Son is affection toward the Father.

His Experience as Affected by Personal Relationships

There are visual elements in the imagery through which Jesus describes his attitudes toward God. "The Father loveth the Son and showeth him all the things that himself doeth." "He that is from God, he hath seen the Father." However, these do not appear to be clear, full visualizations. There is no delineation of face or figure. Motor reactions and whatever is involved in the personal relationship suggested are more significant than the visual images.

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There is in Jesus a feeling of the near presence of the Father. "I am not alone, because the Father is with me." In his prayers we feel that God, to him, is near. When, in his death agony, he feels forsaken, he uses the word "God." "The Father" seems always near, and there is a feeling of being in constant personal touch with him. Again and again he says: "I know the Father."

There is vivid imagery in terms of hunger and thirst and their satisfaction. "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me." "My Father giveth you the true bread out of heaven. I am the bread of life." "The cup which the Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?"

*Various
Sense
Ele-
ments
Involved*

As might be expected, from his ethical and practical teachings, there is decided motor imagery. God is a laboring God. "My Father worketh even until now, and I work." He describes the Father as showing him "all things that himself doeth," as having all power, "being greater than all," so that none can snatch his disciples out of the Father's hand. He feels that his own labor is done through the power of God, for "the Father abiding in me doeth his works," and shows that the way to honor God is through service. It has been mentioned that in one case Jesus uses the word Power for God. Throughout the parables and other teachings concerning the relations of man toward God, one feels the greatness of his conception. God is universal, powerful, giving power to Jesus and to all men. He is a king, with authority over legions of angels. This sense of the power of God is involved in his feeling toward his mission. Again and again he speaks of "the Father that sent me," and it is with a sense of responsibility as well as of power from God that he says: "I seek not mine own will but the will of him that sent me." No element in the experience of Jesus seems more significant than the motor sense of union with God in activity. So great is the meaning of this divine union in service that he says: "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me." And the proof of his mission is in this union in service: "The works which the Father hath given me to accomplish, the very works that I do, bear witness of me that the Father hath sent me."

The attitude of Jesus seems generally to be that of expansion and buoyancy. His conceptions of the greatness of God, his participation in the Father's character and work, and his cheerful appreciation of all the good things of life, seem to indicate inner feelings of this sort. He speaks of being glorified by the Father, and of the glorification of the Father through the active service of his disciples. This expansive-buoyant feeling may also be implied

SENSE EXPERIENCES

in his frequent references to his having come down from heaven, having come from God, or being sent by the Father. A feeling of inner shrinking and humility is also discernible at times. Even in the glorification of the Father there is a self-depreciation. "I seek not mine own will." "I do nothing of myself." "None is good save one, even God." And in the supreme testing time there is a sublimely dignified humiliation when he says: "The cup which the Father hath given me shall I not drink?" and at last the agonized cry, "Why hast thou forsaken me?"

Conspicuous among the experiences of Jesus is the feeling of union with the Father. This involves something more than a feeling of a near presence. It is involved in his active participation in the Father's work, but is more than holding experiences in common with him. There is a closer bond than that of original relationship involved in the repeated statement, "I and the Father are one." It is a feeling of the presence of God not merely beside him but within him. It is an inner possession, so that he says: "The Father abiding in me doeth the works," and "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." There is doubtless an involved complex entering into this feeling of inner union. Beside the personal and tender emotions which the son feels toward the father, there are probably inner strains and organic reactions, the nervous thrill which commonly accompanies, in times of special emotional fervor, the feeling of being possessed by another will than one's own, and such a balance of strains as made possible the deeper peace which characterized a great part of his experience. Again and again the biographers of Jesus picture him as possessed of an inward peace in the midst of outer conflict. The Master asleep during the storm attracts their attention. And when, in violent controversy, Jesus meets the scribes and Pharisees with a quotation from the Hebrew scriptures or some quietly uttered bit of proverbial wisdom, one is struck by his calmness rather than by his intellectual skill. And the world has never forgotten the scenes of the arrest of Jesus, the illegal pretense of a trial, when he stood in calm dignity, answering his judges with a few quietly-spoken words, and meeting taunts and accusations with silence.

*The
Feeling
of Union*

A study of the life of Jesus indicates a wonderful variety of strong opposing strains and inner tensions. A powerful personality must be one of powerful and varied impulses. In every great man there may be found opposing strains which make his life a struggle, which develop certain phases of his character by opposition, which makes his actions sometimes appear inconsistent

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Con-
trolled
Inner
Tensions

and paradoxical. The truly great man is he who can control a variety of opposing and powerful tendencies so as to preserve a balanced and well-directed life. The "simultaneous contradictory characters" in the life of Luther, for example, show the remarkable complexity of his nature,¹ and such opposing inner forces may be discovered in any man who has exerted a powerful and continued influence. Such opposing impulses and characteristics are blended together in the life of Jesus. Professor Starbuck has discovered no less than a dozen pairs of such contradictory characters—conformity and iconoclasm, gentleness and fiery-temperedness, good cheer and sombreness, courage and shrinking, egotism and humility, passionate unrest and peace, and other inner oppositions equally striking. Doubtless these oppositions which appear in his outward life were accompanied and conditioned by inner twists and strains, involving organic and kinesthetic experiences of great variety. The remarkable thing which marks the uniqueness of the life of Jesus is that in him these opposing strains were wonderfully balanced and restrained. With all its inner struggles, his life was controlled in the interest of an inner harmony which still amazes the world. At times we can see evidence of inner struggle. Jesus is tempted in the wilderness, and seems again and again torn between the desire to do the immediate helpful deeds which call him, and to instruct his disciples in the principles of the spiritual kingdom. He felt keenly the divisive and revolutionary nature of his teaching, and said:

"I came to cast fire upon the earth: and what do I desire, if it is already kindled? But I have a baptism to be baptized with: and how am I straitened till it be accomplished! Think ye that I am come to give peace in the earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division."

But with all the opposing elements in his life, Jesus was able to control them so that they contribute to a powerful and enduring influence, an example of the subjection of diverse impulses and inner strains in the interest of a harmonious life. He was tempted to use compromising expedients, but maintained his spiritual equilibrium. He foretold the persecutions which his disciples must face after his death, but said, "Nevertheless, I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you that I go away." And though he desired the cup of suffering to be removed, he said, "Howbeit not what I will but what thou wilt."

¹ Heisey, *A Study in the Mysticism of Luther*, Thesis, University of Iowa, 1911, p. 49ff.

Sense Elements In Coleridge's Hymn

THERE is perhaps no work of literature which blends together a greater variety of sense and feeling elements in the expression of a God-experience than Coleridge's Hymn Before Sunrise in the Vale of Chamouni. It is at once a God-experience and an appreciation of nature. Its full appeal depends upon the reader, as does that of all literary artistry, and your experience in reading the poem will differ very much from mine, and still more from that of the poet. However, it may be possible to find certain sense elements involved in the appreciation of the hymn which are common to writer and reader, and to recognize the great variety of its sense and feeling elements. The poet has brought a rich variety of these elements into the open, but an appreciation of the poem involves a far greater variety of sense elements than appears on the surface. The poem begins:

*Rich
Imagery*

Hast thou a charm to stay the evening star
In his steep course? So long he seems to pause
On thy bald awful head, O sovran Blanc!

These introductory lines have a very complicated setting. The poet stands in the valley, looking up toward the dominant feature of the wonderful landscape, "sovran Blanc." He is in an attitude of worship and awe. The mountain is a living presence, the "Great Hierarch," the representative of God; and the whole experience, personal attitudes, sense-feeling complexes, and all, is at the same time an appreciation of nature and an experience of God. In and through the Alpine scene Coleridge sees and feels the presence of God, and the objectification of the scene is the echo or reflection of his own inner appreciation and worship. That the hymn involves a rich variety of reactions to nature indicates how close a God-experience may be to other experiences in the life of appreciation. It may be said that Coleridge is merely picturing the mountain as praising God, but he is doing more than that. In his appreciation of the mountain he himself is praising God, and for him the view from Chamouni—mountain, glacier, streams, forest—means God, and in his ecstatic enjoyment of the scene he

*The
Mountain
Representing
God*

THE GOD-EXPERIENCE

feels the relation between himself, the Alpine wonders, and God. In the very word "thou," in the first line, there is a rich complex of all these elements, which one can appreciate in part by reading the entire poem through, then coming back and recognizing the elements which lead to the personification of Mont Blanc and are involved in the apostrophized pronoun.

*Sup-
pression
of Artic-
ulative
Ele-
ments*

The poem presents a wonderful variety of sense elements, in terms of almost every sense, a bewildering succession of visual, auditory, motor, tactual, and other images, each the key to a more complicated experience. A remarkable feature is the frequent emphasis of intimate sense elements by the direct negation and suppression of articulative sense elements. Audition is thus repressed in the following:

The Arve and Arveiron at thy base
Rave ceaselessly; but thou, most awful form!
Risest from forth thy silent sea of pines,
How silently!

Here a vivid auditory image is brought forth only to be expunged in the interest of imagery more deeply significant to the total experience. What remains in this silence is a very complicated mass of motor strains and organic sensations involved in a feeling of awe, and a sympathetic feeling of the upward thrust of the great mountain. The imagery involved in silence may include an auditory element, as what we call silence is usually only relatively such, but its essential elements are of an organic and kinesthetic nature. This suppression of the auditory is found again in the following lines:

Who gave you your invulnerable life,
Your strength, your speed, your fury, and your joy,
Unceasing thunder and eternal foam?
And who commanded (and the silence came)
Here let the billows stiffen, and have rest?

And an auditory element is suppressed even more precipitately in the following passage:

Ye Ice-falls! ye that from the mountain's brow
Adown enormous ravines sloped amain—
Torrents, methinks, that heard a mighty voice,
And stopped at once amid their maddest plunge!
Motionless torrents! silent cataracts.

To be sure, here is a sudden arrest of various images, of which the motor elements are as prominent as the auditory, but it is clear

SENSE ELEMENTS IN COLERIDGE'S HYMN

that the suppression of the violently auditory is in the interest of a deeper expression of meaning through the sense elements more intimately involved in an attitude conditioned by silence. These passages also illustrate how sense imagery gains by refinement. Here are intense motion and sound suddenly replaced by silence and the tensions involved in the stoppage of motion. But the auditory and motor elements which remain as a sort of echo or back-fire have gained a peculiar effectiveness.

A hymn involving the scenery of the Alps may be expected to have visual imagery in profusion, and such is the case. However, the visual imagery has rich and vivid intimate sense connotations. The early morning darkness about the mountain is thus pictured:

Around thee and above
Deep is the air and dark, substantial, black,
An ebon mass: methinks thou piercest it,
As with a wedge.

*Relation
of In-
timate
to Visual
Ele-
ments*

This is far more than visual. The one word "deep" represents, for most people, a rich, complex of intimate sense elements, while other descriptive words unlock other complexes each of which may involve as many other sense and feeling factors. There are tactual and kinesthetic blends involved in such words as "substantial" and "ebon mass," while the figure of the peak as a wedge piercing the sky brings in the imagery of pressure, pain, and motor tensions.

At certain climaxes of the poem, when the most deeply feelingful and significant values seem to be reached, there is a sublimation of the visual as well as the auditory elements, and an apparent blending and fusion of all the sense experiences, a sort of sensual auto-intoxication, culminating in an ecstatic condition.

*The
Experi-
ence
Culmi-
nating
in
Ecstasy*

O dread and silent mount! I gazed upon thee,
Till thou, still present to the bodily sense,
Didst vanish from my thought: entranced in prayer
I worshipped the Invisible alone.
Yet, like some sweet, beguiling melody,
So sweet we know not we are listening to it,
Thou, the meanwhile, wast blending with my thought
Yea, with my Life and Life's own secret joy:
Till the dilating Soul, enrapt, transfused
Into the mighty vision passing—there
As in her natural form, swelled vast to Heaven!

Here is vision present to the eyes but "vanished from my thought." It is softened, subdued, submerged, fused into a vague sensory mass, until the worshiper forgets the visual presence and

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worships the Invisible. The whole experience is described as like that of music heard with the ears, but eliciting so direct a response from the intimate senses that "we know not we are listening to it." The more significant things are the feelings of elation, "the dilating Soul," the feeling of expansion which accompanies that of the union with or internalizing of the great objective symbol. The blotting out of vision in the experience of seeing Mont Blanc seems at first a loss of the essential element. But it is really in the interest of a fuller description of the total experience. To know how dependent such a description is upon intimate sense factors, try to describe Mont Blanc in purely visual terms, or put together the purely visual elements in Coleridge's poem. Vision is essential to the experience, but without the more deep-seated and feelingful elements the experience is void of appreciation and meaning. A purely visual description of Mont Blanc would be a grotesque verbal cartoon.

The final complex, the grand *finale* of the hymn appears to center in audition. The streams, the storms, the avalanches, as well as the pine trees with their "soft and soul-like sounds," are called upon to praise the name of God. With all the significance of this cumulative auditory imagery, the concept "God" involves what is perhaps the greatest possible sense-feeling complex. Here it certainly involves, as elements in its setting, all the complexes of the entire hymn, but these with all their richness are to the full God complex as a bucket of water to the ocean. The poet recognizes the limitations of anything except the fullest content of all the blended senses, and this he can express only by capitalizing the word GOD.

Thou kingly Spirit throned among the hills,
Thou dread ambassador from Earth to Heaven,
Great Hierarch! tell thou the silent sky,
And tell the stars, and tell yon rising sun,
Earth, with her thousand voices, praises GOD.

XVI

Sense Elements In Hindu Literature

ORIENTAL poetry differs widely in its sense imagery from the poetry of the West. There is a richness in its varied sense appeal which is, to us, exotic. It is but indifferently imitated by any of our poets. This quality, which is found in the sacred literature of the Hebrews, the Persians, the Chinese, and the Hindus, is conditioned by the directness of appeal to the intimate senses, the high valuation of the affective elements in religious experience, and the oriental emphasis upon the internal realities. Ours is a different temper. If we seek the inner realities it is through the mediation of the external, and hence the articulative senses are relatively over-estimated. We have a rich devotional literature, but it is largely based upon our oriental sacred books, while the bulk of our religious writings is argumentative, intellectual, and rationalistic. There is a natural basis for this distinction between East and West, and invidious comparisons are unwarranted, but it is well to remember that for our deepest expressions of religious experience we still go to the ancient East.

*Char-
acter-
istics of
Oriental
Poetry*

There is a peculiar, almost intoxicating richness in the imagery of the Vedas, those ancient hymns in which the people of India worship the gods of their traditional pantheon. In the hymn which follows, allowance must be made for the figurative language in which the imagery is clothed. Being addressed to nature divinities, the Maruts, or Storm-gods, it is naturally full of the imagery of the open air, the clouds, thunder and lightning, and rain. There is a brilliant visual imagery, and auditory elements also play an important part, but most noticeable of all are the intimate sense images which enrich and internalize the experience of the worshiper. It lacks the sublime depth of the Hebrew Psalms, and the feeling of restraint which we find in them, but it is a real reflection of the inner experiences of those who worshiped the gods of the storm.

*The
Vedic
Hymns*

TO THE MARUTS¹

1. Those who glance forth like wives and yoke-fellows, the powerful sons of Rudra on their way, they, the Maruts, have indeed made heaven and earth

¹ Mueller, *op. cit.*, Vol. XXXII, p. 126ff.

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to grow; they, the strong and wild, delight in the sacrifices.

2. When grown up, they attained to greatness: The Rudras have established their seat in the sky. While singing their song and increasing their vigour, the sons of Prisi have clothed themselves in beauty.

3. When these sons of the cow adorn themselves with glittering ornaments, the brilliant ones put bright weapons on their bodies. They drive away every adversary; fatness (rain) streams along their paths.

4. When you, the powerful who shine with your spears, shaking even what is unshakable by strength, —when you, O Maruts, the manly hosts, had yoked the spotted deer, swift as thought, to your chariots:—

5. When you had yoked the spotted deer before your chariots, hurling the stone (thunderbolt) in the fight, then the streams of the red (horse) rush forth: like a skin with water they water the earth.

6. May the swiftly-gliding, swift-winged horses carry you hither! Come forth with your arms! Sit down on the grass-pile; a wide seat has been made for you. Rejoice, O Maruts, in the sweet food.

7. Strong in themselves, they grew with might; they stepped to the firmament, they made their seat wide. When Vishnu saved the enrapturing Soma, the Maruts sat down like birds on their beloved altar.

8. Like heroes indeed thirsting for fight they rush about: like combatants eager for glory they have striven in battles. All beings are afraid of the Maruts; they are men terrible to behold; like kings.

9. When the clever Tvashtar had turned the well-made golden, thousand-edged thunderbolt, Indra takes it to perform his manly deeds; he slew Vritra, he forced out the stream of water.

10. By their power they pushed the well aloft, they clove asunder the rock (cloud), however strong. Blowing forth their voice, the bounteous Maruts performed, while drunk of Soma, their glorious deeds.

11. They pushed the well (cloud) athwart this way, they poured out the spring to the thirsty Gotama. The Maruts with beautiful splendor approach him with help, they in their own ways satisfied the desires of the sage.

12. The shelters which you have for him who praises you, grant them threefold to the man who

SENSE ELEMENTS IN HINDU LITERATURE

gives! Extend the same to us, O Maruts! Give us,
ye heroes, wealth with valiant offspring!¹

In this ancient hymn there is a remarkable vigor and vividness of sense imagery, an imagery which reveals the inner experiences of the worshiper. But it is not the imagery of a thoroughly internalized religion. It is the inner experience of a people's childhood; experiences which still objectify themselves brilliantly. The deeper God-consciousness of India is revealed in the works of that present-day poet, so new to the Western world, Tagore. There is found in his works a similar rich sense imagery to that of the millenniums-old Vedic Hymns, but it is more delicate, more internalized, without the objective limitations of the cruder ancient polytheism.

The Objective Expression of a Child Faith

In Tagore is beautifully illustrated the sublimation and refinement of sense images, which marks not only the highest art but the finest appreciation of the God-life. The Vedas are brilliant with visual imagery; in Tagore the visual element is relatively repressed, delicate and evanescent. The auditory elements of the ancient hymns are vivid and bold; in Tagore there is a sublimation of hearing like that of Jesus, who summoned to an experience deeper than auditory when he said, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." The Vedas fairly reek with odors, while through Tagore's poems float the delicate suggestions of flowers and fruit and all the sweet smells of the fields and forests. This distinction holds true for all the sense imagery which is so richly blended in both the ancient Vedas and the modern songs. There is the spirit of childhood in the Vedas. The senses are exuberantly active, and sense experiences appear to be valued for their own sake. In Tagore, however, with the same keen appreciation of the things of sense, there is a refinement, a delicacy, a sublimation of the more articulated and externalized sense elements which gives the intimate sense elements and feelings free play, and places the little songs of the Bengali bard among the deeply significant religious expressions of our time.

Sense Sublimation in Tagore

Tagore has been a revelation to our somewhat jaded Western senses. In his songs there is an appreciation of all things good and beautiful, together with a deep sense of human values, of the

¹ Stanza 1. Mueller says that wives, "impetuously rushing into the arms of their husbands, and appearing before them in all their beauty," appear frequently in Vedic poetry. The sex feeling here discovered constitutes an important part in the sense basis of the God-experience.

The sacrifices mentioned were probably of *soma*.

The original meaning of the third line was that the storms, by driving away the clouds, made the earth and sky appear larger.

Stanza 7. In a war of the gods, Vishnu defended the Maruts against Vritra.

Stanza 9. Tvashtar is the workman of the gods, the fashioner or creator.

THE GOD-EXPERIENCE

springs of life and character, which has given him a sudden distinction in Europe and America somewhat comparable to the esteem in which he is held by his own people. From *Gitanjali*, a book of songs of which William Butler Yeats has said, "In all his poems there is one single theme: the love of God," the following selections are taken.¹

SONG NUMBER SEVENTY-THREE FROM GITANJALI²

Deliverance is not for me in renunciation. I feel the embrace of freedom in a thousand bonds of delight.

Thou ever pourest for me the fresh draught of thy wine of various colors and fragrance, filling the earthen vessel to the brim.

My world will light its hundred different lamps with thy flame and place them before the altar of thy temple.

No, I will never shut the doors of my senses. The delights of sight and hearing and touch will bear thy delight.

Yes, all my illusions will burn into illumination of joy, and all my desires ripen into fruits of love.

Tagore, as the above poem proves, is no Hindu ascetic. He values every sense experience, and in and through them he finds God. It is worth while to notice what a variety of sense elements the above little song contains, and how they all express the poet's relationship toward God. It is worthy of notice, too, that the visual and auditory elements in Tagore are generally subordinate to those of the intimate senses. In none of the poems which I have examined do articulative experiences seem dominant. The following song, for example, has its visual element, but the glimpsed face of God is the visual symbol of an intimate personal relationship.

Sup-
pression
of Artic-
ulative
Ele-
ments

SONG NUMBER SEVENTY-NINE FROM GITANJALI³

If it is not my portion to meet thee in this my life then let me ever feel that I have missed thy sight—let me not forget for a moment, let me carry the pangs of this sorrow in my dreams and in my wakeful hours.

As my days pass in the crowded market of this world and my hands grow full with the daily profits, let me ever feel that I have gained nothing—let me

¹ *Basanta Koomar Roy*, Rabindranath Tagore, New York, 1915, p. 90.

² Tagore, *Gitanjali*, London, 1913, p. 68f.

³ Tagore, *op. cit.*, p. 73f.

SENSE ELEMENTS IN HINDU LITERATURE

not forget for a moment, let me carry the pangs of this sorrow in my dreams and in my wakeful hours.

When I sit by the roadside, tired and panting, when I spread my bed low in the dust, let me ever feel that the long journey is still before me—let me not forget for a moment, let me carry the pangs of this sorrow in my dreams and in my wakeful hours.

When my rooms have been decked out and the flutes sound and the laughter there is loud, let me ever feel that I have not invited thee to my house—let me not forget for a moment, let me carry the pangs of this sorrow in my dreams and in my wakeful hours.

XVII

Some Practical Conclusions

THE preceding studies have shown the special significance of the more deep-seated and intimate senses in conditioning immediately our sense of appreciation of values, including the greatest of values, God. They have shown how the descriptions of more intimate experiences of God, ancient and modern, oriental and occidental, literary and personal, indicate their absolute dependence upon such conditioning factors as inner strains, relaxations, and thrills, and the general states of feeling related to them. From all these findings there are several practical conclusions to be drawn.

*A Basis
for
Values*

1. In the intimate sense and feeling factors of consciousness is to be found an immediate, natural, and universal basis for values. Men have searched everywhere for criteria of values, and have built many theories to account for æsthetic, moral, and religious standards. The immediate solution of their problems is in the instinctive inner attitudes which we have inherited from the total past experience of human, to say nothing of sub-human, life. Many have recognized the significance of these internally conditioned evaluations, but have failed to distinguish their natural basis, and hence have built up a variety of theoretical systems of mysticism. The position here taken unifies the values and explains the close resemblances between æsthetic and moral and religious appreciations. Values are thus based in the very nature of man, and known through instinctive attitudes conditioned by complexes of bodily reactions. It is thus that all objective values are recognized. Their origin is coincident with the development of life, and traceable to the same design and process. This is the mysticism of immediacy, through which goodness, truth, and beauty are recognized and evaluated.

*The
Vital
Nature
of Re-
ligion*

2. The God-experience is not a mere cognitive, analytic, articulative process. No man can by searching, with a logical telescope or an analytic microscope, find out God. There is cognition in the experience, but there is more of recognition. The more fundamental elements are feelings, attitudes, appreciations, the warm, intimate and vital functions which give significance and value to any object of thought.

SOME PRACTICAL CONCLUSIONS

There has been a vast deal of searching for an intellectually apprehensible God. Apologetics and evidences, of varying degrees of consistency, have occupied the attention of religious thinkers, and proofs have been offered for all sorts of theological theories. But religion cannot live upon syllogisms. Even belief in God is much more than intellectual. The essential thing for us is not the possibility of knowing or understanding God, cognitively, but of feeling and experiencing God. Religion is a vital thing, deeply implanted in the original nature of man, in the very constitution of a feeling, sensing, recognizing, appreciating, and evaluating organism.

3. The recognition of the vital and affective and active nature of the God-experience, as distinguished from its cognitive and less significant phase, would do much to unify the forces of the religious world. The deplorable religious divisions in this country are, in very great degree, maintained in the name of doctrinal and intellectual differences. We have limited ourselves and hindered our possibilities of service by close attention to matters of belief. We have tried to reason others into our way of thinking, and have even based our hopes for religious union on the dream of some intellectually-conceived and universally acceptable creed. We need not reject our rationalized beliefs; indeed we cannot; but we can recognize the secondary character of such beliefs in religion. A uniform creed is not necessarily valuable, but the uniform recognition of the vital rather than merely intellectual character of the God-experience would be a blessing to the world. The fundamentals of religion are not our beliefs in a transcendent reality, but our vital relationships toward this reality and toward our fellowmen, and these involve the intimate reactions and attitudes which we have been discussing.

*A Unifying
Recognition*

4. This viewpoint is profoundly significant in relation to the problems of religious education. It has been an error of both religious and secular education to emphasize out of proportion the training of purely intellectual processes. Intellection is of no value in itself, except as related to the values based in the active, moral and affective life. Religious education is especially dependent upon the training of the feelings, and the senses with which they are co-ordinate. Hence, our first aim should be to develop sympathy and friendliness and a spirit of helpfulness, and a fine appreciation of all things beautiful, true and good. This will mean, that a curriculum of religious education will be designed directly to exercise these qualities. It will mean that the educative value

*Religious
Education*

THE GOD-EXPERIENCE

of play will be recognized. It will surely mean that the study of theological doctrine will be postponed until the boy or girl shows some natural appreciation of such conceptions, and hence will find in them more than a barren and tedious waste of dogmatic intellectualism.

*Teach-
ing
Children
About
God*

5. The question of what should be taught concerning God is one upon which this study may cast some light, although it will not solve all the difficulties. The objectification of God in time and space is probably natural to children, although the form of this objectification depends largely upon instruction. But even in childhood the value of the God-experience is not chiefly visual or auditory. Its value is relatively small at first, but it grows rapidly as the child learns to appreciate attitudes and relationships toward God. Children are more sensitive than we often think to personal attitudes, and to say that God is like a father, provided the child has a worthy father, or like a mother, or kind, or attentive to one's needs, is to gain his appreciation for the God-idea. He will doubtless symbolize God visually, but he will feel an interested relationship toward God, which is, from the standpoint of religious education, a much more important thing.

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